

# RAGHUWÁR DAYÁL

SOMETIME PRIEST OF VISHNU

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ADELAIDE GAIL FROST

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# RAGHUWÁR DAYÁL

Sometime Priest of Vishnu

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The true story of his life as related by himself to

ADELAIDE GAIL FROST

Missionary of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions

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A CENTENNIAL OFFERING FROM  
MAHOBA, INDIA

Dedicated to all who have shared in effort for the  
redemption of idol-cursed India

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*Om! Now meditate upon the excellent glory of the divine  
Breather-of-Life,  
Shine thy light into our darkness!*

—THE GAITRI MANTRA TO THE SUN.

In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not.—*A figure referring to Jesus spoken of by John the Disciple.*

## INTRODUCTION.

THIS book is the product of "between-whiles" of work, during extra and late hours, faithfully rendered by a devoted servant of the King.

The subject of the sketch is an interesting character and wins his way into the heart. With careful training he should be a mighty power for good in the warfare against principalities and powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world and spiritual wickedness in high places.

He is an example of what the power of Christianity may accomplish.

Formerly a high caste man, a Brahmin of the Brahmins, dedicated the eighth year, concerning zeal a priest in the chief temple of Mahoba, one who all his life has lived in an atmosphere of superstition, strict caste observance and idolatry, but now a humble follower of the lowly Jesus.

It is an increasing source of wonder to us how he has completely broken away from all that he held to be life and religion and God, but which he now counts as refuse and loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, his Lord.

We ask of those who read this life-story that they lift up their hearts in prayer for Raghuwár Dayál, and for those who have been entrusted with the training of this new disciple of our Lord.

W. E. GORDON.

*Christian Mission, Mahoba, U. P., July 8, 1909.*

# RULES FOR PRONUNCIATION

OF

Hindi and Sanskrit Words in this Book.

*a* as *u* in *us*.

*á* as *a* in *father*.

*i* as *i* in *it*.

*í* as *e* in *feet*.

*u* as *u* in *pull*.

*ú* as *oo* in *moon*.

*e* as *a* in *ate*.

*ai* as *i* in *ice*.

*o* as *o* in *old*.

*au* as *ou* in *out*.

*s* as *s* in *such*.

*ch* as *ch* in *church*.

*th* as *t* only aspirated.

## AUTHORS' STATEMENT.

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THIS is an unusual story to hear, sitting at an ordinary dining table. To be sure all dishes have been removed to transform its surface into that of the usual writing desk, but from the pictures on the wall to the doily in the center of the table, these are but commonplace surroundings, and the story we are to hear in their midst is the strange story of a divinity student of the East, the far tropical East. Have you patience to listen with me, O friends? Shall we try, together, to understand what Hinduism is? The way is a tangled one through a jungle of peculiar and ancient beliefs. The student before us would lead us, would make us understand the traditions, the attitude, the need of his people. Will you try to know what Arya's children believe, and through some tiring explanations of a Hindu scholar catch his view-point, understand his need, know the wonder that has come into his life? Your opportunity is a rare one, for through the years I, at least, have known of no voice from the dark interior of a great Hindu temple penetrating the thick stone walls and coming to western ears!

In the face across the table from me is intensity and keen thought. A few weeks ago he was as effectually prevented from sitting in this easy, natural way at the table of a Mission House as though he had been bound hand and foot with heavy chains!

As I take up my pen and look expectantly toward the face across the table, I know I must ask those who are to read the recital to walk in a winding way; that I must attempt to illuminate what is so difficult for western minds to understand, but if this man, Raghuwár Dayál, cannot make you and me understand, then we can never know.

In the preliminary conversation with the narrator of this story I learn of that dim past in whose shadows strange shapes waver, who are believed by millions of India's men and women to be authentic historical characters, and so I arrange for you in beginning the founding of a famous Hindu family.

RAGHUWÁR DAYÁL



Raghuwar Dayal, Sometime Priest of Vishnu

## RAGHUWAR DAYAL.

IN the village of Nand, in a Hindu kingdom in the heart of India, lives a Brahmin family of the Kashyap *muni* tribe who trace their ancestry back five thousand years, so far back into history that it becomes more poetry than truth, and all the narrative of events is in *sloks* of varying names and measures. Kashyap *Muní* lived in the days of King Paríkshat, a grandson of one of the five Pandávas who played so important a part in India's mythological history as related in the *Mahábhárat*.

In those days an impure *mlecha* (foreigner) was killing the cattle so sacred to the Hindus, and, therefore, greatly offending them. When called before the King this barbarian said: "Your reign and the age of Dwápar is over, and I, Kálíyúg, the Age of Blackness, have come to reign four hundred and thirty-two thousand years."

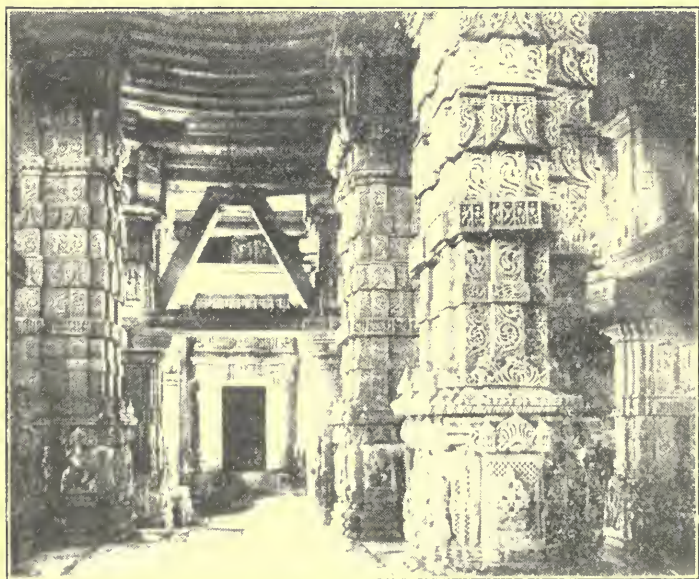
The King replied: "I shall depart, but thou shalt remain." Kálíyúg then asked: "Where shall I abide?" Paríkshat answered: "You shall dwell in all gold, you, the Age of Blackness, shall find an abiding place in shining gold." The great King had forgotten that on his head was a crown of this same shining gold and straightway Kálíyúg took his place there which caused the once good king to change into a different mind and heart. Before him, by the roadside, sat an holy man with closed eyes meditating. Near him was a dead snake, which the King picked up on the point of his bow and flung around the neck of the saint. When the *chela* (disciple) of the *Muní* saw

how his master had been dishonored, he took the snake from around his neck and threw it to the ground, sprinkling it in the act with water from his sacred drinking cup, which brought the snake to life. And when the *chela* saw this he said: "Seven days from this day, this snake shall bite and kill Rájáh Paríkshat." Upon this the holy man opened his eyes and said: "You have not done right, this Rájáh has spread goodness and truth and peace over the whole earth, and what matters this he has done to me?" But the curse remained, and when it came to the King's ears he gave over his royal cushion to his son and went to spend his last days on the banks of the sacred Ganges. As he sat there, awaiting his death, came Sukhdev, the god of joy, from whose mouth sweet words grew a hundred fold sweeter, and through all the seven days he composed and recited the famous poem of eighteen thousand verses, called by the Hindus "Saptá Bhagwata" (the story of Seven Days). The pandits say of all the poetic recitals of their ancient literature this is the most famous. It fell from the lips of a shining, beautiful child, Sukhdev, and as he sat and listened the King was filled with a wondrous joy that took from him all fear of death.

Near the Ganges in a forest dwelt the great Muni Kashyap, a physician in the glance of whose eyes dwelt immortality. When the doom of King Paríkshat came through the whispering leaves of the forest to him, he decided to be present on the seventh day, that when the deadly snake bit the King he might restore the monarch's life by a glance of his eyes in which *amrít* (immortality) lived. As he journeyed toward the Ganges, the fatal mystic serpent stood in his path in the form of a Bráhmin, and said: "The errand upon which you go is fruitless; if you wish money, here it is, take it and return." The Muni replied: "I will go on, I want not your rupees; I will save the life of King Paríkshat, doomed to be bitten by the deadly serpent." "Ah," sneered the disguised one, "by my bite I will dry up yonder green



mango tree and if you can restore it to its green I shall know you can save the life of the King." By the bite of the serpent the tree withered, and by the glance of the Muni it came back to its fresh greenness. "Thou hast restored the tree, but if I bite thee, canst thou bring thyself back to live among men?" With that the Brahmin disappeared and there was but vacancy before Kashyap Muni, so he arose and went on his mission. As he journeyed, he saw in the road a curious crooked stick which attracted his attention. He picked it up and slung it across his shoulder, and, like a flash, the crooked stick was the deadly crooked serpent which at once inserted its poisonous fangs into Kashyap Muni's back beyond the reach of his eyes of life-giving power. He knew he must die, so he called his disciples and told



Ancient Brahminical Temple, Gwalior

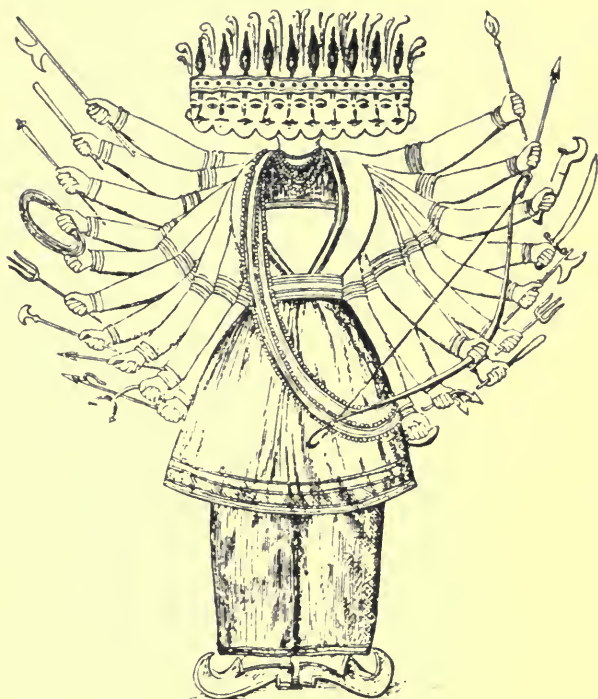
them if they would cut his body up into pieces and cook and eat, every piece would make from one who ate it another Kashyap Muni with eyes restoring life wherever their glances fell, but no one would commit the sacrilege of eating human flesh. So the great Muni died with his mission to the King unfulfilled, and on the fatal seventh day he, too, bitten by the serpent, left his garment of flesh.

Kashyap Muni left behind him many sons, and one of these was the ancestor of the Brahmin family of Nandpura, who, for four generations, had lived in that spot and read and taught the sacred books of the Hindus to the people. One of the sons of that family sits before me, a small man with a keen, eager face, and carefully he explains the story of his life; its language, its customs, its religion is as far from those of my childhood "as the east is from the west"!

He leans forward and this is what he says: "I, Raghuwár Dayál, am the youngest of four sons. When a child is born into a Brahmin family, from that very hour he is surrounded by religious rites and ceremonies. First of all comes the astrologer and makes out his map of destiny. To this day in my father's house is my *janma-kundali* (astrologer's chart forecasting the future of a new born babe). I was born under the fortunate star of Swántí (Arcturus), the fifteenth lunar asterism, in October, 1883. This is considered a most propitious time. Every drop of rain falling into a shell in the time of Swántí becomes a pearl, and only the showers of this season can quench the thirst of the bird *papáyá*, which cries through so many months, '*Pío! Pío!*' (I am thirsty! I am thirsty!) In our ancient mythology Swántí is one of the wives of the sun. My map of destiny said that I should be well known and a saint; that I should have for my friends kings and princes. I used to fancy that meant the rulers of my country, now I feel that it must mean being a friend of sons of the King of kings! Every

child of Brahmin parents is a Shudra (lowest caste, really out-caste) until he is eight years old, when he is invested with the sacred cord and becomes a *dvij*, a twice born one among the Hindus. When I had reached the age of eight, a number of pandits came to assist in the ceremonies of such an occasion, but one was chosen as my *guru*, or master, who, as long as we both lived, was to be my religious instructor. The chief part the *guru* takes in such a ceremony is the whispering into the ear of the young neophyte that mystic sentence called a *mantra*, which may be nothing more than the exclamation 'Om!' with this added: 'I bow to Rám.' 'Om' is a sacred word which came down from heaven from the only voice of that realm, that is from Vishnu. So its repetition makes all holy and banishes evil. Even before this is whispered a ring of *ķusá* grass has been placed on either hand to make the whole body pure.

"This is the story of the *ķusá* grass, and from it you may gather how much is interwoven into every ceremony of the Hindus. Long ago, in the Age of Truth, Vishnu came to earth in the form of the wild boar, that is, he had the head of a wild boar but the body of a man. Vishnu's proper abode is in Paradise behind its seven gates, but one day four sons of Brahmá, created by the thought of his heart, strayed into Paradise, past the two watchmen of each gate till they came to the seventh where they were forbidden entrance by Jai and Vijai (victorious ones). The young sons of Brahmá, the Creator, said: 'for this offense we doom you to be *rākshas* (demons) through three births.' Thereupon a great noise arose in Paradise and the throne of Vishnu trembled, indicating that there was a disturbance in his realm. Out the monarch came and the doom of his watchmen was told him. He said: 'Be not troubled, when you become demons I will slay you and set you free; after the third slaying you shall take your place again by the seventh gate of Paradise.' The first birth of these two sentinels of Vishnu



The Demon Rawan

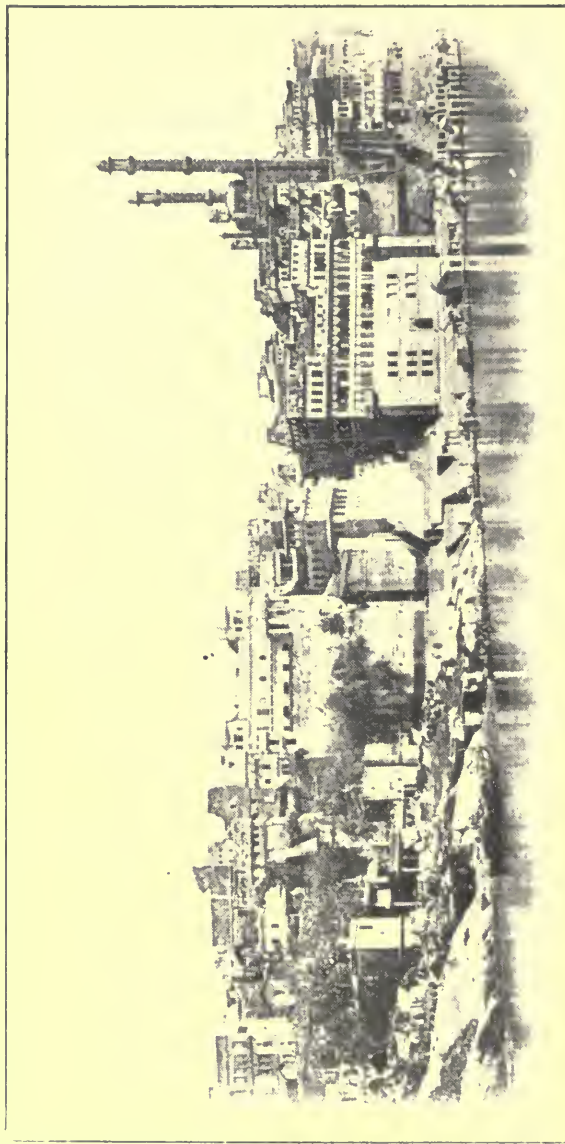
was as the demons Híranánk (Golden-eyed) and Hirankashyap (Golden-bodied), demons like shining gold. It was to slay these, and, therefore, to set his sentinels free from one demon birth, that Vishnu came to earth in the wild boar incarnation. When he had performed this liberation he shook his great head with the long tusks and shaggy hair of the wild boar till the hair fell to earth and sprang up as long green *kusa* grass which ever afterward was used to make holy the Hindu, and to set him apart for any vocation. Then a common hemp cord is extended across one shoulder and tied loosely under the other arm. In

his hand a staff of *chewala* wood is next placed, and, on his feet, shoes of the same material, for this is the wood sacred to great Brahmá, the Creator. The boy now enters his age of Brahmácharyá when he must think only upon religious questions, must always sleep upon the ground, and read only the Vedas. He may not live with his parents, but must go to dwell with his religious teacher, nor may he marry until he is twenty-four. He is only to study and meditate on the Vedas." "But how many Brahmins keep to this religious rule?" I asked. "Very, very few. Once when I was the priest of the temple here a Brahmácharyá came. He spoke only Sanskrit, but I understood he wished food, and, of course, arranged that he receive it.

"I was not sent from home as I should have been, according to the Hindu Scriptures, but a *guru* or master was called to the house, not to teach me to read, for that I was taught in my home, but just to teach me religion. Being a Kashyap Brahmin I was taught the Yajur Veda. There are four Vedas believed to have proceeded from the four mouths of Brahmá, for it is written in the Bhagavata Purána:

*'From Brahmá, the Creator, with his faces four,  
Sprang from several mouths the Vedas four,  
When in meditation, vast and deep,  
He thought upon the Worlds To-Be for evermore!  
From his eastern mouth, Rig-Ved;  
From his southern, Yajur; from the west,  
Sam; from the north, Atháráván;  
Beside praise, sacrifice, hymns and all Best.'*

"Brahm, the all pervading essence without form, called the Great Spirit, commanded Brahmá to create all things; there was no restriction—good, bad and indifferent, the great All of the universe was to be created and so Brahmá obeyed, though himself unknowing Good from Evil until the Vedas themselves



Brahama Ghat



springing from his four mouths enlightened him, showing to him the difference between Right and Wrong. As it is written in the *Ramáyan* of Tulsi:

*'Both Good and Evil Brahmá, with his own hand, made,  
When came the Veds and taught the nature and the quality of  
each and which should be obeyed.'*

"There is then a distinction between Brahm and Brahmá, the former is believed the divine essence, while the latter is the first of the Hindu Triad; Vishnu the Preserver is the second and Siva, or Shiv, the Destroyer, is the third.

"The Yajur-Ved treats of the attributes of divinities and of the order of temple services. It is supposed to be especially useful to the Hindu student of divinity to prepare him in all the rites and ceremonies of an idolatrous priesthood. Of course, I studied Sanskrit, the very language of the gods, and committed to memory hundreds of *mantras* and prayers. This is the one I have so often reiterated in the temple just outside these walls. I said it in the morning when I entered the temple and again when I passed out into a night of stars:

*'Oh, God, Parmátmá, Spirit great and high,  
Most lowly, useless and unworthy, I  
To come within Thy temple's sacred walls,  
So ignorant I of habits suited to these holy halls!  
And coming know I not how fitly I should part  
From Thy great Presence with an unoffending heart,  
Nor know I how to worship Thee;  
Nor way to do Thy work all righteously!  
In the deep wisdom Thon alone dost give  
Strong grows my hand and ready for all deeds while I shall  
live!' "*

How I wish I could fittingly write what Raghuwár recites!



The Taj Mahal



First he intones the stately Sanskrit verse, then translates it into bald Hindí, lastly I versify it in English. Now he goes on:

“There is a *mantra* for every act of life, but few Hindus know them or say them. As a priest I used to repeat this *sloḥ* each morning before I touched Mother Earth with my feet:

*‘Om,\* Prithiví! Upholder of all worlds upon your sacred breast,  
Hail, Deví! Where the feet of Vishnu and all gods did rest!  
Forgive me that I place these feet impure, these feet of mine,  
Upon Thy face, that I shall tread upon Thee through the shade  
and shine.*

*For all that I shall do this day Thy greatness to offend,  
Forgive, and overlook the deeds which I shall not intend.’*

“When we go to bathe there is many a *sloḥ* and *mantra* to be said. The habit of my life has been when entering the water of lake or river to first untie the knot in that one long lock of hair which every Brahman leaves on the crown of his head and to wash it first of all, saying:

*‘Oh, Sacred Lock, the daughter of a god,  
Great Brahmá’s child, his holy seed,  
Performer of a myriad penances,  
I make this prayer for thee, mayst thou be freed!’*

“Then tying the knot again in that sign of Brahminhood I was used to say:

‘By Brahmá’s thousand names, and by the hundred names of Shiv; by Vishnu’s thousand epithets for thee, O Lock, I give obeisance to all three and tie again the knot!’

“The next act is the dipping up of water in the hand while this *mantra* is chanted:

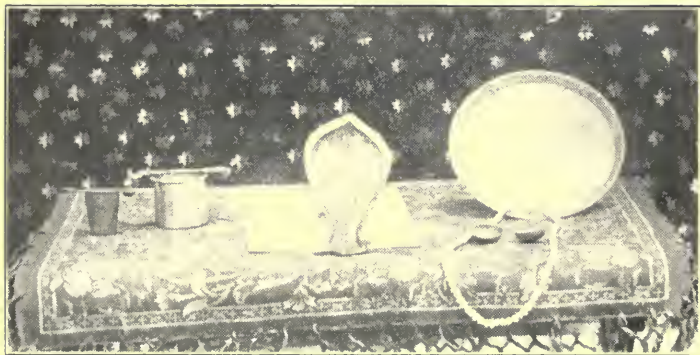
'Oh, Ganges, Jumna and Godávari,  
 Oh, fair Sarswati and Narbaddha,  
 Oh, Sindhu and Caveri, hail!  
 At this time, oh, ye sacred waters  
 Meet where now I stand!  
 Haste here together with your lord—  
 The all-embracing Sea!'

"If any one should question: 'How is it possible for all these waters to mingle in the well-known lake or tank of our native village?' the priest replies: 'Man's bidding is naught, but by the power of the *mantra* all this miracle comes to pass, just as the tiny spear of the *mahaut* (elephant driver) controls a great elephant so the little *mantra* commands the river goddesses.' "

It happened, the night this part of the life-story was told me, that a very old *ankush*, or elephant spear, used in the figure, lay on a table near by. I had purchased it not long before as a very curious piece of mechanism in the capital of the oldest reigning house in India, Oodeypore of the Sun Kings. Raghuwár took it up and by a dramatic turn took me far back to the wars of this eastern land in the days before an English face had been seen amongst her palm trees, and then he proceeded:

"Those days in Agra I spent much time committing to memory *mantras* and *sloks*. As a child accepts the teachings of his elders so I accepted what I was taught quite implicitly up to the age of nineteen. Perhaps it will help you to understand my life in Agra if I tell you the routine of but a single day. In the morning I arose before the Sun because I must do my part in assisting *Surya Naráyan* (the Sun) to conquer the fourteen thousand demons of darkness, so I hastened down to the blue Jamna, the daughter of the Sun, and bathed, saying *mantras*, and then I put on a clean drapery and seated myself on the stone seats of the shore underneath the shadow of the high rose colored walls of

the Fort, where I could look away to the shining marble purity of the Táj Mahal of the mogul, Sháh Jahán. You have been there, but have you ever seen the picture along the noble Jamna in the first soft light of the morning when Surya Naráyan is fighting the hosts of darkness till streaks of blood-red clouds lie across the faint blue of the First Time (morning) heavens? It is very beautiful even to eyes long accustomed to the scene, and every morning I went down to that richly decorated riverside to help Surya Naráyan fight the daily fight with Darkness, I, who knew not the True Light of the World, with my copper dishes and sandal-wood, sat and played in densest darkness by that riverside. You know we use brass dishes generally, but never in the worship of the Sun, only copper may be used in our ceremonies then. I will enumerate all I took with me to use in this morning worship:



Articles used in the worship of the sun. In the middle is the copper ladle from which oblations are poured

“A copper *lota* used only for this purpose.

“Two small, straight-sided copper cups.

“Two tiny spoons with long handles.

“Two other spoons of peculiar shape.

“Two little saucers.

“Two copper plates.

“A stone upon which to powder sandal-wood.

“Sandal-wood.

“A book of *Sloks* used in the worship of the Sun.

“A cow’s mouth-bag with a *tulsí málá* (string of one hundred and eight wooden beads).

“The reason I took with me two of each article was that one of each is necessary for the initial worship of Vishnu, who is believed by the Hindus to make all holy, pure, sanctified. Beginning with the worship of Vishnu before going on to the adoration of the Sun is somewhat, only somewhat, like the preparations one makes before going to church, bathing and dressing in clean clothes. I seated myself near to the water’s edge and dipped up a little in my hand with which I touched my lips to purify them before saying the following *mantra*:

*‘This, my unholy body, make it sacred, pure,  
With all its members sanctified and full of praise,  
That when the lotus eyes of Vishnu rest  
Upon me He may find no spot unworthy of His gaze!’*

“Next I took up the bag made to represent the head of the animal most sacred to the Hindu—the cow. In this bag, which is called Gaomukhi (cow-face) and which you must often have seen, I kept my *tulsí málá*, that string of one hundred and eight wooden beads used in the worship of Vishnu, and upon this I repeated once for every bead the *mantra* whispered in my ear by my *guru* when I was invested with the sacred cord, supposedly given to him by some occult power. It was in Sanskrit, of course, but I will translate it into Hindi for you:

*‘Om, Great One, from this day I Thee obey!  
And thou, my honored, kingly guru, to*

*Thee my obeisance, Namaskar!*

*The mantra thou didst teach is good exceedingly!*

“Next I repeated on the round of the *málá* five times, that is five hundred and forty repetitions, the *Gaitri*. This *mantra* is said to be the mother of the Vedas, and the Hindus believe by its repetition a man is saved. Once a *Kshatri* (warrior) from repeating this *mantra* became a Brahmin. No greater miracle could occur! Of course he had to repeat it *some thousands of years!* It is the most sacred text of all the Vedas and it is the sunrise mantra which I said five hundred and forty times each morning for years. Strange that it should be *a cry for light!*

*‘Om! Now meditate upon the excellent glory of the divine  
Breather-of-Life,  
Shine thy light into our darkness.’ ”*

How many thousand thousand times every morning is this prayer for *light* sent up, often from lips that do not understand, but it floats out in a cloud of murmured prayer from the Himalayas to Ceylon—“*Shine thy light into our darkness!*” If India were heard for her repetitions the burst of shining glory would have come, for this cry has gone up at the early morning hour through long centuries of idol gloom in India; and who can say that God is not in these days, in His way, answering the prayer of the *Gaitri* for the Sun of Righteousness is indeed arising “with healing in His wings.”

The young man goes on thoughtfully: “How I think of it now! Do we Hindus think that God is deaf, that we keep on this millionfold cry of the Sunrise *mantra*?

“Oh, how familiar is the *Gaitri* to me, more so than my own name. I wonder if I shall ever forget, perhaps I shall continue to remember in order to help others to receive the True Light!

“After many vain repetitions I made my libation of Jumna’s water to the Sun. I placed in the special copper spoon for this,

the water, took it in my hands put together to form a bowl, and said as I poured the libation slowly into the Jumna:

*'Oh, Surya Naráyan, hail, thou thousandfold light,  
Lord of the Earth, thou art a mound of radiant might!  
Hail, Surya Naráyan, I love thee with an holy love most high,  
This water which I offer thee do thou accept and hear my cry,  
Oh, Maker of the Day, do thou accept and heed my sigh!'*

"I had to do this twenty-one times and then I read a lesson from my book, the sun *Purána*, which is chiefly made up of *sloks* in praise of the Sun. This is a chief *slok*. You may remember that the Sun is the leader, the general of the hosts of the gods of light. Demons are black, and where the Sun does not lead with his light the gods cannot see to make battle with their midnight foes!

*'Oh, Surya Naráyon! On every side your ears do hear;  
All things you make most shining clear;  
You taste each flower and fruit and tree;  
You lead the shining hosts of realms most free;  
You are the Chief and Captain of the Army of the Day!'*

"When this was done and Usha, the Dawn-wife of the Sun, began to touch the Táj with her pale gold fingers, I took up a spoonful of water and tossed it into my mouth to purify it as I must have done all through my worship if my mind became distracted in any way from my religious duties.

"Next came the dutiful worship of ancestors. Manu, the Moses of the Hindus, writer of laws, established that between sunrise and four o'clock the fathers may be worshiped. At this morning time I always worshipped the forefathers and the second metal plate, on which was rice and other grains, was for an offering to them. I placed the grains in my hands and then dipped them in and out of the water while I said, 'May the Vedas be satisfied, may the Moon be satisfied, may Vishnu

be filled, Brahmá, Earth, Mountains, Wise Sages, Ancestors, Sacred Rivers, the Ten Pillars that support the Earth, may all be satisfied!' The Hindu believes if he has no son to perform this *pújá* (worship) his soul will remain in Hades."

At this point I asked Raghuwar if a man should die leaving a son, who should also die later without a son, what would happen. He answered promptly that the whole line back to the beginning would fall into the Under World of pain and darkness, and there remain through one hundred and sixty ages! "However, there is this provision," he added, "If a man die leaving a son who has no son, this son hastens at once, if he be dutiful, to the city of Gáya, a famous place of pilgrimage, where he makes an offering called *pind*. This is a ball of rice and pulse or of flour, or, if this be impossible to get, or the suppliant be very poor, a ball of sand may be bestowed. By this offering the dead ancestors are saved from falling into the depths, but woe to the man who has no son. Straight the whole line go to the realms of Darkness for the one hundred and sixty ages which Brahmá revolves!

"My early morning devotions were over; indeed, the morning was well advanced, for these ceremonies require four and a half hours. We were twenty-two students who went through all this each morning, and where we sat no common nor unclean person was allowed to come. We went back to our Vedic college for we were all students of Sanskrit, the difficult Sanskrit of the Vedas, full of *matras*. The *Upanishads* change the poetic forms of the Vedas into prose forms.

"Perhaps you would like to know how our college was arranged. From one long veranda opened twenty-two tiny rooms like cells. In each room was a raised place upon which to spread the sleeping mat. Our books and brass dishes and a roll of clothing were the sole furnishings of the room, excepting the pictures of gods and goddesses on

the walls. We had no idols there because we did not have time to serve them with propriety. I had a picture of Rám Chandra and of him and his queen Síta in my room, for of all books I liked my Valmíki's *Ramáyan* the best. My copy was all separate leaves, oblong in shape, perhaps eighteen inches long, and the leaves piled one above another reached a height of about the same number of inches. I came to know the book so well that if the wind scattered the pages I could put them together in order again. The four Vedas were similarly arranged, each a great, high pile of leaves. As I said before, my especial study was the Yajur Ved, which is in two sections, the White and Black. You must know that each god has his own special color, and Brahmá's is white; Vishnu and the Sun each claim red; Indra, the Sky-god, who holds the lightning's sword in his hand, whose bow is the rain-bow, owns the color of his ethereal abode, blue. Many believe the White Yajur-Ved gets its name from Brahmá's color. I studied the Black especially, which we called the Partridge Veda, because when Vyása, the original teacher of it, became displeased with one of his disciples he told him to return all the knowledge he had imparted! Forthwith the disciple was compelled to eject it from his mouth, and the other pupils, seizing this opportunity to obtain knowledge second-hand, became partridges and appropriated the wisdom of their Master in the way approved of at certain periods in the school-boy's life, that is, they ate it!

"There is also this story about the White Veda, that the Sun from the mouth of the horse, Vájur, taught the disappointed disciple of Vyása the White or Bright Yajur Veda which is thought to be the clearer of the two.

"As I have said I learned hundreds of *mantras*, and in the few words of each, pages on pages of meaning might be written. If I repeat to you four lines the explanation will fill four pages,



but I will say a short one from the Yajur which pandits often say when they are together; it is in praise of Vishnu:

*'To thee are thousand lines like veins that reach into all worlds,  
To thee a hundred eyes, to thee that hundredfold wisdom,  
Thou knowest the secrets of the heavens,  
Lord, nor in no world is hidden aught  
Which is unknown to thee.'*

“There are eighteen Puránas, that is, teachings handed down from ancient times. I read the Vishnu Purána the most, which treats of Krishna. You probably know some of the stories of Krishna. He is the ninth and last incarnation of Vishnu, and not at all like the one expected as the tenth incarnation, for the one to come is to be the Blameless Incarnation. He is to be born in Moradabad of a Brahmin family, and this is commonly spoken of him, that he will go about on a white horse with black ears. To all who accept him he will have a sweet fragrance, but to those who will not receive him he will have an odor deadly and evil. But we are wandering from the last incarnation of Vishnu—Krishna. He often helped the weak and his dark deeds the Hindus can put in a white light, but it is certain that he has left behind him many a low and evil practice. Krishna was the son of Vasudeva, and there was a prophecy that the eighth son of this same Vasudeva would kill his uncle Kansa, King of Mathura, who was indeed a demon-born one. Kansa had so afflicted gods and men that Earth went to the parliament of the gods and threatened to throw herself down into the lower regions unless Vishnu did something to relieve her of her burdens! He promised to come as the son of Vasudeva's wife, her eighth son.

“The attendant of Vishnu is the many headed snake Shesha. Whenever the god became incarnate the snake also took some form in order to remain his servant. He came as the seventh son of

Vasudeva. He was miraculously saved from Kansa, and when Krishna was born his earth-father carried him away from the palace while Indra rained upon the earth and drove all the inhabitants into their houses that no one might know of Krishna's birth and tell Kansa. Shesha accompanied this last incarnation of Vishnu and held his many heads over the babe as an umbrella! When Vasudeva reached the Jumna it rose up to kiss the feet of Vishnu incarnate, and would have drowned Vasudeva had the babe not reached down his foot and touched the Jumna before it got over his earth-father's head! Vasudeva took Krishna to the house of the herdsman, Nand. Shesha became Balarám, his companion and protector. Krishna lived among the cowherds and married Rádhá, a milkmaid who was really Lakshmí, the goddess of wealth and Vishnu's queen. Once there was a peculiar battle when fever sent out by Shiv fought with fever engendered by Krishna and the latter was victorious. When fever of Shiv departed he said: 'Whoso recalleth this battle shall be exempt from all febrile diseases.' Still is this believed by the Hindus and the story told to fever-stricken people.

"How many hours I have spent learning stories of the gods, tales I studied as solemn truth. We lived in a busy city where there is the thunder of trains and factories, where there are modern colleges and schools, but we pursued our lives in our most ancient hall of learning as our fellows did hundreds of years ago. Each cooked his own food, sitting on the place specially consecrated for this purpose, and there each ate his rice and pulse and bread and vegetables quite alone. We were all Kashyap Brahmins, but we never sit and eat together unless born of the same parents, and some brothers are so afraid of tarnishing their caste that they eat apart from others of their own family! Food that is cooked in butter or syrup we may eat away from the consecrated spot, and, perhaps, you have observed that Hindu travellers eat only sweets and those cakes called *puris* cooked in melted butter.

We could have the outcaste drawer of water called a Kahár to wash up our brass dishes. Such outcastes are called *Antij*; that is those who are born at the end of the line and who must travel through successive births and rebirths, through countless generations, yes, even countless ages! So my day passed by in what is very like a monastery. When sunset approached we again went to the blue Jamna to help Surya Naráyan on his way. We bathed and each put on a silk drapery and sat down for the evening worship. Figuratively, at such times we put on our armour by saying this *mantra*. It is short, but as we say it heart, eyes, head are touched and much is enfolded in it:

‘This life no weapon can wound, no fire can burn, no water drown, no wind parch, all, all is guarded.’

“Next I poured out from the copper spoon dedicated to the Sun the evening oblation, and then I clapped my hands three times in honor of the Creator, the Preserver, the Destroyer; then I threw water about me in a circle to keep any evil spirit from interrupting my devotions. I said again and again the *Gaitri*, and finally when the Sun sank, throwing back crimson and gold glows upon the shining purity of the Táj, I went back to the college with my fellows.

“I have not told you about our recitations. Our pandit was Sítarám, a very learned Hindu. We twenty-two novices sat in a line before him with our ‘Leviticus’ open before us, though we were not supposed to look into it. Indeed, so alert was our master that he saw any glance downward, and the offender was thrown out of the recitation. So trained was his ear that, though we recited in concert, any slip in the recitation of a *slok* or *mantra* was at once detected by him as a money changer knows which rupee rings false when a handful is thrown on the ground and quickly tosses out the spurious coin! We, also, who misquoted, were dropped out!

“We did not go often to the town or the bazar, but there



A Priest by the Riverside

was one place by the railway bridge where we sometimes paused to see a band of men whom we knew as men bent on spreading some new religion; we noticed, too, that the speakers were young men of India, with a white man accompanying them, a different one each week."

"Probably young men from the Agra Bible College came there to preach."

I interrupted him with this remark, and he went on to say, "Yes, I now know that on those days I was near to the answer to my prayer for light. We were all, however, quite wrapped up in our devotions and in the long lessons to be learned by rote. I was very ambitious to go to Benares also.

"We believed in those days that the seven great shrines of our country were pieces of the abode of the gods, and every one of these portions of Paradise dropped down upon India from above is a place of pilgrimage, but Benares, of all, is the religious capital of the Hindus. It is said and believed by the majority that every living creature which dies in Benares expires with the right ear upward, and Shiva himself whispers this mantra in the exposed ear:

" 'Om! Ráma, Giver of Salvation, all is a burnt offering to Brahm!'

"So the Hindus say one who dies in Káshí, the Splendid, is certain of salvation. Of course, the Hindu idea of salvation is not the Christian's; the Hindu is saved from going backward in the line of reincarnations, hastened toward unconscious absorption into the Deity; this is *mukṭi*, salvation.

"It may be as well here to state the Hindu idea of degrees in salvation. The first salvation is called that of *nearness to God*; one may be in any form or condition, but near to God. The second is in being of *god-like form in any one of the worlds*; the third is being in any form, but abiding in God's world, and yet not necessarily near to God; the fourth and highest salvation is

*absorption into the deity with no separate existence. When I was a Hindu I did not desire this last and so-called greatest salvation. I did not wish my individuality swallowed up, rubbed out,"* so said Raghuwár earnestly to me.

"I attended in Benares a much larger Hindu college than in Agra. There were five hundred students, all Brahmins, of course. It is called the Vedántá Páthshálá (school), and its patron is the Rajah of Benares, who is a worshipper of Shiv, and the college is near his palace. The head or president of this religious training school is Dulichand Shástrí, and there must be twenty-five or thirty pandits under him. We did not have to cook our food there, but each separate division of the Brahmin caste had its separate cook, and the school gave us free one meal a day. The parents of the pupils usually furnished them with enough money to buy an evening meal also.

"We had to study incessantly in this college of the sacred books, excepting that from four to eight each morning we worshipped by the riverside."

I could not but note here how truly the Hindu student of religion keeps his Morning Watch. The young priest of Vishnu still observes this watch, but oh, how differently!

"We went to worship Surya Naráyan by the bathing place of Brahmá. We believed the Creator himself had sanctified it by here performing his ablutions. There were fifteen hundred huge umbrellas made of matting where we could sit at our ease during those long morning devotions. We returned to the college and studied till ten, when came the meal of the day, followed by study again until noon, when we began our recitations. My principal subject in this college was the Rig-Veda. It is a very large book and a towering pile of leaves! This Veda is made up of praises. My favorite of the Vedas, however, was the Sáma Veda, which has a peculiar history. You remember that the King of Birds, Garud, as he bore Vishnu through the

air, made a rythmical beating with his wings, from which came the Sâma Veda. Its subject is Vishnu, and as I was preparing for his priesthood, I studied this book with especial diligence. This is a *mantra* which I very much liked:

“‘*The Invisible Vishnu, in whose light the world lies at peace; he calms the storm; by him all healing arts bring perfect health; he quiets the murmur of the forest leaves; to the Creator himself he gives peace.*’

“I stayed and studied in this stronghold of the Hindu religion for two years. I lived in a dense atmosphere of idolatry; every incident of daily life was bound up with ceremony. I was preparing for temple service. I performed no priestly offices as yet, but my mind was being packed with words in praise of the gods or petition to them. After the two years were over I went to my home for a little while, and while there spent my time on the Ramâyan. My mother did not like for me to go off to school again, but my father and grandfather wished that we brothers should all be great pandits, so my elder brother, Chandrawân, went with me to Brindaban, the scene of the youth of Krishna. It is near his city, Mathura, and is a town of temples; there are three hundred and sixty of them, and nearly all are magnificent in their proportions. A number are of radiant white marble, pure against the green of their forest surroundings. The daily labor of the workmen on one temple cost eighty thousand rupees (\$26,000); the materials were far more. Almost all of these rich buildings are for the enshrining of idols of Krishna and Râdhâ, his milkmaid spouse. In the days of this incarnation of Vishnu, Brindaban was a wild and beautiful forest on the banks of the Jumna. Krishna lived in the village of Nand with his foster parents, the keeper of herds and his wife. Grand old trees still shadow this collection of temples. One bathing pool is called the *Banyan Ghât*; there is still a widely spreading banyan tree there, and it is written in the *Bhâgavat* that Krishna sat



on the branches of this tree and played such wondrously sweet music on his flute that all the inhabitants of the forest stopped their work charmed and stood motionless!

“From the bathing places of Brindaban the Jumna never departs as it does recede from many other of its banks. There is one bathing place known as ‘The Conquered Thought.’ Once when Krishna succumbed to the childish temptation to eat clay, his foster mother told him to open his mouth and show her what he had in it! He did so, and, behold, the whole earth unrolled before her in the boy’s mouth, mountains, rivers and seas! She recognized then that the child she had come to chastise with her stick was a changeling, a child of the gods! So, as it was by the riverside she changed her opinion of Krishna, this bathing place is called ‘The Place of the Conquered Thought.’

“I lived on Krishna Street in the house of a pandit and learned amidst the scene of Krishna’s youth about this incarnation of Vishnu. I studied with a learned pandit the Bhágavata Purána, the subject of which is the Krishna incarnation. There were four of us who read together. We had to tell the meanings of the *śloks* to our master as we sat before him with our Sanskrit books.

“As Brindaban is a favorite place of pilgrimage and the latest incarnation of Vishnu very popular, I saw my brothers in race and religion thronging into this forest place of temples by the thousands, all seeking, seeking! Perhaps I should relate here what a pilgrim generally does when he comes to such a place of idolatrous worship.

“There is a narrow-gauge railway from the city of Mathura to Brindaban and the fare is four pice (two cents). The train stops at a station which is but a part of a Krishna temple. At train time the station is simply thronged with priests, each with a large-paged book bound in red, which is rolled up like a scroll. You must often have seen such in a merchant’s shop. What do



you suppose this register is? Well, it is full of the names of the townspeople and of the neighboring villagers of this certain priest's native place. All the Hindus in this particular district are enrolled in his curious brown paper book, the names of the heads of families and all their descendants. As soon as a pilgrim gets off the train a priest approaches him and asks his village or district first; if it happens to be also the district of the priest he ascertains the pilgrim's name, and can tell him if any of his ancestors far back ever trod in the footprints of Krishna in the forest of Brindaban. If he nor other priests can find the name, there is this provision: A certain distinguished priest is appointed as the guide of all such. You must remember that these priests are not the same as those who perform the rites of a temple. These are *guides* to worship." As Raghuwar described the *pandás* to me they seemed perfectly expressed by the words "religious drummer." Raghuwar continues:

"If the pilgrim's name be enrolled in the *pandá's* register, he says, 'Yes, here your father came; he gave me such and such a gift; here are the names of your ancestors further back than you yourself know. Your great grandfather, Vijai Singh, came here and gave my predecessor a cow!' He shows the eagerly listening and delighted pilgrim his long, scroll-like book, with some old, old pages. Is it strange that there is a singular feeling of homelikeness, of being known, of great hope of great things? Ah, the pilgrims feel that they are on holy ground at Brindaban, for every place Krishna's young feet trod is sacred, and my feet from touching his pathway shall be fit and cleansed for Paradise! You will find this hard to understand as I proceed with my story, for all that enters into worship is not what you have learned from your, no, *our* Book."

"Are the pilgrims satisfied?" I asked. "I know most are not. They believe sin rolls from them there, and yet right in the very footprints of Krishna, sin after sin is committed; they believe that

they actually receive *freedom from the power of sin*, and they go back with even *new impulses toward sinning*. Oh, it is sad, sad!

"I was telling you of the *pandás*' registers. In every great place of pilgrimage in India the names of my ancestors are written, yes, and my name is written in every one of the seven great centers. When a pilgrim has found his priestly guide he is taken to some famous bathing place in the Jumna for his cleansing, and then the priest conducts him to his own home. By gifts of the rich for generations, this house is large and can easily accommodate, in our style of living, a hundred guests. There are the little fireplaces where each may cook his own meals; there is a shelter off the courtyard and a place to put away his foodstuffs and dishes. Oh, monkeys simply swarm in the forests! For centuries they have been considered soldiers of Ráma and this generation is most bold and daring, troublesome, destructive and ill-tempered! To eat in peace one must go in the house and shut the door or the food will be straightway snatched! The windows of all houses in Brindaban are barred, so one can get some air together with protection from the marauding army of Ráma! The *pandás* are ever ready with all kinds of information about every sacred spot and will gladly guide strange feet in the footprints of Krishna, so the eager pilgrim says: 'Great King, I pray you show me all the main places our religion makes most sacred.' The *pandá* assents and starts out with a group of pilgrims. If he be a scholar, as very few of them are, he has a perfect guide to Brindaban in the Bhágavat Purána. Few of the pilgrims can even read Hindi, to say nothing of Sanskrit. It is not pleasant reading about Krishna in all parts of his Purána, mischievous and disobedient as a child, and as he grew up often stealing from the herdsmen and disgracing his foster parents. Some say he is only a portion of a portion of the essence of Vishnu; some say he was nothing short of Vishnu himself. In the Bhágavád Gíta there is a different presentation of Krishna. This song is a part of a large

book of our land called the Mahábhárat or the great war. It is the philosophy of Krishna as related to his cousin Arjuna, and one forgets in this the mischievous boy who stole the milk-maid's butter and the youth who danced with the queens of the dairy. He is a philosopher, and, in the Mahábhárat itself, a great warrior.

"This is an example of the wisdom of Krishna as expressed poetically in this small but compact part of the story of the great war:

*'The wise man and the doer of wisdom,*

*One indeed are they—*

*Where worker finds reward, the wise man finds the same—*

*This in equal way.'*

"We must return to the pilgrims and their guide. The largest temple of all will be one of the first places visited. It is of red sandstone, and in it is the golden image of an incarnation of Ráma's younger brother, Lakshman. It is called Shrírang. Truly it is a temple to a god of gold. Here very much gold and silver is probably offered, it is also the Bank of a great merchant family in the city of Mathurá. Three or four hundred years ago an ancestor of this house invested his vast estate and treasures of gold and jewels in this immense temple. Quite a sum remained over and it was placed in the temple coffers, and to this day, according to the provision in the great merchant's will, his descendants may receive necessary money from the temple.

"When the pilgrims visit this place some one of them may promise, for instance, that he will give a hundred rupees to the god if his son recovers from a certain illness, and he is thoroughly informed that if he does not fulfill his vow he will be stricken dumb!

"Next the guide may direct his party to the beautiful white marble temple of Bibárá Lál, whose great fortune built it. In

this is a leaden image of Krishna, his proper color, the blue-gray of lead. I used to like to go to these temples because the most learned pandits were there.

“Three years of the valuable time of my youth were spent there, and then I returned to my home town and began my calling of Reader of the Puránas.



### Puran Reading in a Temple

“I read to the people, in many portions I recited, for these great books, the Bhágavat Purána of Krishna and Valmíkí’s Ramáyan, I still know almost entirely by rote; as my English lesson is most plain to you so the difficult *sloks* of the Puránas are to me! I recited the entire Bhágavat Purána in one village, and in another near the Ramáyan. Each took me four months. There was no small preparation made for my entertainment, and it meant a very continuous and almost arduous occupation. However, I loved to recite and explain, and every day I received the worship of the host of the village. That is, some man of the village who wished to attain merit for *himself* called me, provided

the place for the reading, my food for the day and paid me money beside giving presents. The place of the reading was beautifully decorated with feathery green bamboos, a little throne was made of soft rugs and cushions, and on this I would sit from six in the morning until one in the afternoon, and from four to eight in the afternoon, and recite the *Puránas*. Each day for four months, twice a day, a palanquin and a horse were sent to my home. The palanquin was to bear the sacred book, wrapped in silken coverings; mine had first red and then green and gold spotted silk. The horse was for me. Perhaps four or five hundred men, women and children were gathered to hear me read and explain the difficult poetical meanings. They questioned me also when they did not understand. When I was seated on my cushion the host worshipped the book; he threw, with the little spoon called the *áchman*, a few drops of water in his mouth to purify him, then he rubbed on the holy volume powdered sandalwood and fragrant flowers and heaped garlands upon it; rice, tulsi leaves, sweets and money were offered and incense burned. Then came my turn. He touched my feet worshipfully, on my fore-head he placed red paint and a few grains of rice, garlanded me and burnt incense, and then music struck up and I began to read immediately afterward. When the incense was burned all the people stood up. The host and hostess must always be present, their draperies are usually tied together and he has on his hands the sanctifying rings of *kusá* grass. As I read, five or seven Brahmins sat before me, saying on their beads the whole time: 'Om! We salute the son of Bāsdev (Krishna)!'.

"To each of these Brahmins the host had to give four annas (eight cents) each day besides food. At the end I received, in one village, three hundred and fifty rupees and a shawl of fine wool embroidered with gold thread which cost probably two hundred and fifty rupees. (In all about two hundred dollars, a very large sum in India.)

"In the next village I received two hundred and fifty rupees and a pair of gold bracelets and three beautiful draperies for women's dress which I gave to my sisters-in-law.

"After reading these two books to the people I started on my pilgrimages. I took the train at Gwálor, which is the large and beautiful capital of the Mahratta King Jíwají Maháráj. There are many temples there, the oldest one is beneath the fort and is a Ráma Lakshman temple. I had received my *certificate* of worship, I had passed in the art and form of religious devotion, I could perform worship where common people were not allowed!

"My destination was Allahabad, and the temples of Gwalior seemed tame affairs to me after Brindaban or Benares. I had to take with me a man to carry my books, for the weight of each was twenty or twenty-two pounds! I knew many people in Allahabad, but I stayed in the house of a Hindu saint who belonged to our part of the country. His house was on the edge of the Ganges and from its balconies we could see Ganga's yellow tide stretch far, far away to where the Jumna meets it. You remember how it looks at the junction of the two rivers?"

"Yes," I answer, "it is wonderful that in a straight line one can see the joining of the two rivers, for the Ganges is yellow from the soil it devours in the first stages of its journey from the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal. By the time it reaches Allahabad it has attained a majestic flow, but it is still yellow while the Jumna is clear and blue and the place of the meeting of the waters is a *distinct line*."

By questioning I found out these facts from Raghuwar about sacred rivers: "The Ganges came down from heaven to bring to life the sixty thousand sons of Rájah Sagar which were so many heaps of ashes in the lower regions. She was afraid that when she struck the earth she would destroy everything, so Shiv said he would catch her mighty volume in his long matted hair.

He felt he could diminish the pride of the goddess somewhat, too, so he held her, imprisoned in the tangles of his thick locks, but because of long austerities practiced by a devotee he allowed one drop to trickle to the earth and it lit on the Himalayas and became a mighty river. Hence Shiv or Siva is always pictured with a figure of the goddess of the Ganges perched on his head! The Jumna is a daughter of the Sun, and therefore, also a goddess. The junction of any two rivers is sacred in Hindustán, hence how very much the more sacred is the junction of two such holy streams as *Gangá* and *Yamuná*!

"I stayed in this monastery four months and read the Puránas to large audiences, but the real reason for my residing there was to learn the ways and habits of a temple of Vishnu. It was really erected for the idols of Ráma, Lakshman and Sitá, but, of course, Ráma is a Vishnu incarnation. In this temple are five hundred round, shining black stones called *Sáli-grám*, and one of my chief works was to see that each of the three *pujáris* (those who perform the rites of a temple) properly attended to the worship of these stones. They are considered most sacred for they are believed to possess the very essence of Vishnu. They are always found in temples erected to Vishnu or any of his nine incarnations. It says in the *Sat Naráyan*:

*'The Sáli-grám, the sacred stone,  
It must be kept, an holy sign,  
In bowl of copper, and each morn  
Pour water on its surface shine.'*

"We were taught in our divinity college that Lakshmí, the wife of Vishnu, dwells in the *tulsi* plant. In the worship of the Saligrám each morning I had to see that two *tulsi* leaves still joined to the same stem were placed on each of the sacred stones. I was given such work for I had been thoroughly taught the rites and ceremonies of a temple. I omitted telling you that as soon



as I got back from Brindaban my father took me to Ujjain, that ancient seat of Hinduism, and there I was examined in temple service and idolatrous forms."

Would you like to know what kind of questions the Hindu brother had to answer when he appeared for his degree of D. D.?

"With what *mantra* should a priest unlock the temple?

"What kind of clothing should he wear each day of the week?

"What is the first work of a priest on entering the temple in the morning?

There were a number of questions on the conduct of worship in the fifteen hours out of each twenty-four that a priest must spend in temple worship.

"I virtually lived in the temple with the two hundred old holy men. They liked to hear me, a youth, recite from their sacred books. Probably most of these ancients could read Hindí prose, but they could neither read nor understand Sanskrit, so I read and explained to them. They were very old, with white hair and wrinkled faces; how they listened! The more there were the more I enjoyed reading to them! When I had finished the daily reading I gave to each of my audience a tiny piece of *tulsi* leaf, which they ate, for if death occurs and the gods find the *tulsi* leaf in the mouth of the corpse the soul that once lived there is certain of salvation, and by no mistake of any celestial gate-keeper can that spirit be sent off to the under world.

"In the mornings and evenings, when the people came to worship, I had to attend to the offerings, as sweets, fruits, rupees, cloth, sometimes jewels, were given by the people—even little children brought offerings, an orange, a cocoanut or sweet meats. Sometimes a girl would bring for the image of the goddess Sítá a pair of gold ear-rings or a jeweled nose-ring.

"Up to this time I had made no pilgrimages, but now it



came into my mind that I should set out to visit the places Ráma, the eighth incarnation of Vishnú had made sacred.

"I first took the train for the far southwestward, in the region of Mysore. I went alone, excepting for my servant, who carried my heavy books. My destination, Kishkindhyá, is the mountain retreat where Ráma tarried four months in his wanderings as a guest of Sugrívá, a monkey-headed deity who sprang from a race born from a tear of Brahmá, the Creator. Kishkindhyá is the place of friendship, because Sugrívá and Ráma were friends there, and those who wish friends reconciled or enemies turned into friends go there to worship at the Shrine of Friendship. Here Ráma related to Sugrívá the story of his lost and beloved wife, and found a sincere sympathizer in Sugrívá, as he had also lost his wife through treachery. And what was more, Sugrívá showed to Ráma the jewels of his stolen Sítá. It seems when Ráwan was carrying Sítá off through the air she tied up her royal jewels in one of her silken garments and dropped them down on the mountain of Kishkindhyá. Sugrívá found them and knew they belonged to a queen and kept them intact. These were Ráma's first clue to the course of the captors of his wife. She had dropped them there not only for a sign of the direction of the flight, but that her husband might know she was a true wife, scorning to wear jewels when separated from her lord and master. On the spot where the jewels were found Ráma took up his abode for awhile, and now there is a great temple there.

"One division of the Ramáyan is called the Kishkindhyá Part. There Sugrívá and Hanumán organized the great army of monkeys which proceeded with Ráma in search of Sítá. Hanumán was their General. Lakshman, the loyal brother of the Rama incarnation of Vishnu, I must have told you was an incarnation of Shesha, the serpent slave of the second member of the Hindu Triad. He was ever with Ráma in his wanderings. I sat for some time on this templed mountain top and read

the Puráñas, and especially the Ramáyan, to the hundreds of pilgrims who came and then I started for the great shrine of Rameshwar, stopping at various sacred places. It took me almost a year to make this pilgrimage. I would stop at various places *en route* where I had heard a wise man lived, or where the country looked beautiful, and often I read the Puráñas to people in the villages through which I passed. The Sanskrit language was my passport to every Hindu town or home. There were some in every town, even where a different dialect than Hindí was spoken, who could understand Sanskrit or High Hindi; they could translate any of my explanations of the Puráñas which the common people could not understand. One town or village furnished me a guide to the next place in which I planned to read the Puráñas. I never stayed in any inn or rest-house; my profession secured me the best place where all my caste observances would be held sacred, also the best food and gifts. On my sacred books would be placed the offerings, rings and bracelets, clothing, rupees, food. The women's jewelry and clothing I took to my mother and sisters-in-law for, as you know, I was not married. A number of times my betrothal was talked of, but I thank my Guide today that I am not bound to an untaught child wife with bigoted Hindu parents. Even when I wandered in the dense darkness of idolatry it was as though a Hand had reached down to me through the darkness and touched me. It took the form of doubt sometimes with me.

“When I reached the great, beautiful temple of Rameshwar, said to have been built by Ráma himself, I found the temple rites perfectly performed. It was a delight to my studious mind, but in that sacred enclosure and holy town I found lying, thieving, deceit, and I asked: ‘*Can this be an holy place where Vishnu dwells and these acts be tolerated?*’ I hungered so for knowledge, knowledge, that I was kept from many temptations. I was truly a pilgrim in search of *wisdom*. I used my Puráñas as guide books

and examined everything to see if all was according to rules laid down there.

“The temple of Rameshwar is probably the largest temple in all India. I have visited all the great temples in my country, but never one so large in extent as Rameshwar. Its court, surrounded by high walls, is a thousand feet long and almost seven hundred feet wide; its gateway is one hundred feet high. Its colonnades are wonderful, and with other pilgrims I remained inside of this enclosure eleven days. This temple is on an island very near the Indian coast and between Ceylon and India. It is said to have been built by Ráma himself to establish the worship of the gods on a wild coast that he might be remembered to India’s southern extremity. He sent Hanumán to Benares to bring the emblem of Shiva to establish that worship in the great temple. The days went by and Hanumán was slow in returning with the idol. The day appointed for the dedication of the temple arrived and there was yet no symbol, so Ráma made with his own hands an idol of sand and the great dedication went on. When the people were returning they met Hanumán with the symbol of Shiva, and then the great monkey knew he was late. He found on his hasty arrival the sand idol established by Ráma, and, filled with pride, he determined to uproot it with his tail, when, behold, he could not, and to this day the mark of the three rounds of Hanumán’s tail are on a sandstone symbol of Shiva in the Great Temple! There is also the marble idol from Benares. There are twenty-five or thirty priests in the temple. They dress each day the shapeless image, put on a jeweled crown and the three horizontal barred sign of Shiva beneath the crown. How this crown sparkles with the very heart of diamonds! The temple has seven gates and only from afar may the pilgrims see the gleam of the jewels on the shapeless stone symbol of Shiva, the Destroyer. I was privileged and could take my offering up to the idol for I had brought from my father’s house a small brass

jar of water from the very source of the Ganges to offer here. We had purchased it for this purpose from a pilgrim priest.

"When I was a priest of Vishnu, in Mahoba, the head man you know so well sent to the source of the Ganges for a copper jar of water which weighed ten pounds and it cost him four hundred rupees (\$135). The main offering at Rameshwar is Ganges water poured over the idol, and from the *source* of the Ganges the water is supposed to be peculiarly acceptable to the god. Such as I could go in and pour the water over the idol, but others, not learned in proper rites and ceremonies, even if they were Brahmans, were not allowed inside the temple. They gave their Ganges water to a priestly guide, who, before their eyes, offered it upon the idol. I noticed the priests would often accept money and allow pilgrims to enter who had no right according to our Shastras to do so. When I saw this I felt the Hindu religion was being destroyed. Even fear of vengeance could not keep the devotees from sin.

"I had learned the rites and was allowed within. As I poured the water of the Ganges over the idol I said this *mantra* :

*'Hail, Shiv, Most Gracious, Only One,  
Thou who dost wear the serpent garland  
Twining 'bout thy neck. . . 'Tis thee I hail,  
Thou, whose power is endless, with thy queen  
Dost sit upon thy throne above!'*

"When I had done this I felt the purpose of my long journey to Rameshwar was complete, and I could turn my face northward again toward Dwárká. This city I believed to have been founded at the command of Vishnu, and built by the sculptor and architect of the gods—Visvakarma. It was the son of this celestial architect who built the bridge for Ráma and the army of monkeys to cross over from India to Ceylon.

"I went by steamship from Bombay to Dwárká. Dwárká means 'Door,' and it is like a gate in the ocean. It is situated on an island on the western coast. Its high walls rise like cliffs in the bay. I went by steamer from Bombay. The island is very near the mainland." It is really a narrow necked peninsula. "As the steamer approaches" ("fireboat," the narrator says), "the sacred island refuge of Krishna appears gay with hundreds of fluttering banners!"

I could not but think, when Raghuwár described to me his first view of Dwárká, that the Hindus do, indeed, in the name of their gods, "set up their banners." I seemed to see it all, the streaming banners against a western sky, ethereal in their remoteness and with their foundations almost invisible! The scene evidently impressed him for he lingered in his description.

"As we approached nearer the towers of many temples appeared, and then the walls of the city rose sheer from the blue-green of the sea. I believed that long ago the Krishna incarnation of Vishnu raised these walls guarded by the salt waters of the western sea and prepared here a city for the Yadávas driven from Krishna's own city of Mathura. It was this way. Krishna, seeing that the inhabitants of Mathura were becoming reduced, resolved to build a citadel so strong that it might be defended even by women! This was the order he gave to the architect of the gods: 'Go build a city in the midst of the sea in which my people may live in peace, unconscious of living in other than their own houses in Mathura. Convey them there in a second!'

"Vishwakarma departed and built, in a single night, on the discus of Vishnu, a city said to be ninety-six miles in extent. I did not measure it, but it is a great, fortified, many towered city! By the next morning the inhabitants of Mathura were all transported there in their sleep, and they awoke with the unaccustomed sound of the sea in their ears! They asked: 'Has the sea come to Mathura?' Krishna remained behind to meet

his foes alone, and, of course, was victorious! I looked with intense interest on this city. Surely here stores of knowledge awaited! I did not find such beautiful temples there as in some other places, namely, Brindaban and Ayodya. Silver and brass gleam amidst the marble and stone of the temples, but, generally speaking, I did not care for this shrine. I saw the Vedas violated there and avarice spoiled the worship. I felt like giving up pilgrimages. When pilgrims are at Dwárká they make such promises as this: 'I will not eat fruit or vegetables until I can feast the Brahmans of my native town.' But such vows as giving up sinful deeds, lying, cheating, giving abuse, these were not made. I have asked many pilgrims what benefits they had received from their pilgrimages, and they would reply, simply: '*I have seen.*'

"Early in my pilgrim life I grew cold. Neither mind nor heart were satisfied. Empty-hearted and empty-handed was the condition of most of the seekers after God when they left the ancient shrines of our people. However, I went on. I think I have visited every one of the great places of pilgrimage of our idolatrous land. There is a country through which I passed on my way back to Central India for which I have a great hope, *the State of Káthiawár*. I want to reveal my vision to you later, but now, in the darkness of heathenism, I trudge on, this time to Badrináth in the fastnesses of the Abode of Snow (Himalayas). Badrináth, Jagannáth (Juggernaut), Rámeshwar, Dwárka. These are the four corners of the earth. Badrináth guards on the north; Jagannath on the east; Rámeshwar on the south; Dwárká on the west. The king of all shrines is Prayág or Allahabad. This latter is the Mohammedan name which the Hindus do not accept. In Ajmere is Pushkar, the *Guru* (Religious Master) of all sacred places. I left none unvisited. Three hundred miles I toiled over hill and mountain to Badrináth in the far fastnesses of the Himalayas. Stony, narrow, difficult indeed is the way, but

I, a Hindu pandit, with the magic of Sanskrit on the tip of my tongue, how much better my condition than that of ordinary pilgrims! All along the way are caves, and in these dwell the *mahátmás* of the Hindus, that is, as you know, the great spirits; there are three classes of them—the young men who are students of the Vedas, passing through the same stage as was I myself, the Brahmacharyá; then there is a class of householders who are also *mahátmás*, in a way the husband is under the dominion of his wife for twelve years, if he wishes during that time to repair to a strictly religious life she has the choice of remaining with their children or going about with him in a wandering or secluded life of devotion as he chooses; the third class are the *Sanyásís*, old men who are liberated from all ties of the flesh. They have passed through the student and householder stages, now they may go where they will. They get so holy sometimes that they walk straight into wells. They don't know what they are eating when their disciples feed them. They are simply oblivious. They carry about with them a bamboo rod on which they hang their Brahmínical cord. All others wear theirs sacredly, but at the *Sanyási* stage they take off this cord and hang it on their walking stick and thus say: 'All life lives in my heart and my life lives in all hearts.' "

Just here Raghuwár brought his clenched fist down on the table and said in a tense way: "What donkeys we Hindus have made ourselves! We haven't the sense of mules!" "Why do you speak so, brother?" I questioned. "Listen," he replied, "the *Sanyási* says *all* life is the same to me, caste is abolished, I know it no more; he can say this by taking off his sacred cord, he can repeat this famous sloka from the *Bhágavat Gítá*:

'The man who sees all life alike (equal),  
And the soul that dwells in all,  
Who knows the World-Soul in his flesh,  
His wisdom cannot fall!'

"For hundreds of years such words have been written in our sacred books, but the Hindu goes on with his garments drawn tightly about him lest he *touch* an outcaste or even a lower caste than himself; he sits apart with the key of knowledge in his hand, neither unlocking the door nor allowing others to enter; they proudly assert themselves Sanskrit scholars, and yet each day they go against their *sloks*.

"See here," and Raghuwár hastily arose, flew to our drawing-room table and brought my Hindí Bible. In a moment he had found his place and read with great force Christ's invective against the Pharisees in the eleventh chapter of Luke. "*Here it is written down, just the state of affairs today!*"

I looked at his keen, eager face and thought: Eight months ago he took for the first time a small Hindí copy of the Gospel, according to Matthew, and stole away to the inner shrine of an idol temple to read it, and now with what ease he finds the exact passage he wishes! "May we write 'Brahmin' in place of Pharisee?" I asked. "*Certainly,*" he replied. "And may we not ourselves fall into a sinful pride?" "Yes, indeed," he answered, "not long ago I went to prayer meeting late when it was my work to arrange the chairs and benches and distribute the singing books. As I sat there the Sahib (Mr. Gordon) began speaking. He said something in a warning, admonitory way that I felt was said *directly to me*. Of course, I suppose he was speaking to the whole church, *but I felt he was speaking to me*. I thought, I shall never be late again. What, shall I let a Hindu think God's work comes second with me now? Never, never!"

"Your experience is not unique," I said, smiling, "others have felt that the preacher meant 'me'! Shall we go back to the heart of the Himalayas and the Mahátmás?"

Then Raghuwar went on: "I always had free entrance to these caves of the Great Spirits, for could I not repeat Sanskrit,



the certain passage to such an abode? I stood before the opening of a cave dwelling and this was the usual dialogue in Sanskrit:

'*Pilgrim*—Oh, Brahman, who abides in this place? Of the three grades of great spirits which one finds rest here?

'*Mahátmá* (from within)—A sanyásí lives here. O, friend, from whither are you journeying?

'*Pilgrim*—From one of the four corners of the earth."

Here Raghuwár stops to make an explanation which would have delighted our Prof. Peckham of Hiram College. "By the change of a final letter, a prolongation even of its pronunciation, in one word I could let him know if I was a pilgrim having visited one or two or many great shrines.

'*Pilgrim*—I have come seeking a boon.

'*Mahátmá*—What boon, O, Pilgrim?

'*Pilgrim*—To discuss with you some question of our sacred writings.

'*Mahátmá*—Enter.

"Then many questions were asked me and I was always made most welcome when they found I could repeat *slok* after *slok* and expound the Vedas. I was fed with roast roots from the mountain side. They tasted like rice and milk. When it grew cold fires were built in the cave. Roots of different kinds in whose lore the Great Spirits were wise, were roasted in the ashes and we ate freely and abundantly. I recited to them by the glow of their fires, and they would beseech me to remain with them. I would stay sometimes eight days in one cave dwelling. I need take no thought of time. It took me eight months to go three hundred miles and return.

"I shall not forget my first sight of the great temple of Badrináth, made from the granite of the mountains, uncarven by man, as the temples of the plains are, and looking small, indeed, in its setting of loftiest mountains

There are a few shops where food stuffs are sold, grains which have been brought on the backs of goats clear from Hardwár, very expensive food, too, I assure you. The pilgrims live mostly under the shelter of some thatch. Oh, it is cold in the nights! I was privileged as I could find a shelter with some holy men in the warmth of a cave. This is a shrine of Vishnu. It is said that the idol of Badrináth was, in the old days, made from the philosopher's stone which changed iron to gold, but it is made of white marble in these days, and who knows if it were ever made from the *páras* stone? There is so much that is confusing in heathen tales!" Raghuwár sighs as he turns to his Bible, which he studies as I write.

"I did not tarry long, but set out for Kedárnáth, the Shrine of Shesh, the Serpent Companion of Vishnu. As I was traveling from Badrináth to Kedarnáth I passed boiling hot springs. They were wonderful to me and I had no explanation for them, but I was told that the power of the *mahátmás* had made them so. Kedarnáth is famous for its tune, at the singing of which the strings of the necklace of the gods break. I did not see any of them break at Kedarnáth when the tune was sung in the temple however! These words are sung to it:

*'Oh, Gangá,\* your waves beat in my heart!'*

"I tarried here but a short time for the sacred source of the Ganges lay beyond. The place is called Gangotrí. From a distance the mountain from whose hidden springs the Ganges begins to run, at least to our Hindu imagination, is shaped like the head of a great cow, the most sacred animal of all to millions of our people. You know the Ganges is believed to be in her earthly form, the daughter of the Lord of the Himálayas:

*'Gangá, whose waves in heaven flow,  
Is daughter of the Lord of Snow.'*

\*Ganges.

"I hastened to fill my brass jug with water from that sacred source and carefully screwed in the brass stopper. This was for a special purpose, to pour out a libation to Shiv, the Great God:

*'The man who pours from Ganges' source,  
Its sacred waters stream  
Upon Rameshwar's idol far,  
Where Ceylon's tides bright gleam,  
He shall the last salvation find,  
To God's own inner self consigned.'*

"That is, the man who offers this libation shall be absorbed into the Deity. I looked over the long way back to Rameshwar and decided to carry my brass jar of water from Ganga's source to that little image on India's southern point, for what is more important than the making sure of salvation? I was young and strong, devoted to my religious books, preparing to be a priest of Vishnu. While I had been disappointed, yet I *hoped* it at least could do no harm. I thought to try every means laid down in my books to gain the final goal of extinction in the personality of God. I bathed in the sacred waters and then I began my long descent of the mountains, tarrying with the cave dwelling *nā-hátmás*.

I went along with pilgrims when they were wise and patient, but if they said: 'Brother, we must reach a certain place today,' I told them it was not my habit to travel in that way, that I went as I pleased, with no certain route that could not be changed, and urged them to go on and leave me. I walked back to Haridwár, that is, 'The Door of Harí or Krishná.'" I remember seeing that place of pilgrimage and the pilgrims bathing in the Ganges there. This is its story as Raghuwár told me:

"It is said that when Shiv reached Haridwar, bearing the goddess of the Ganges in his long locks, he wrung them out on that spot and straightway the river began a broader flow. Al-

ready the Ganges had begun her course toward the underworld to bring to life the sixty thousand sons of King Ságar, and another stream had gone to gladden and refresh the immortals, and now a grandson of King Ságar wished a blessing for the earth as well. Through his endless austerities he won the favor of the goddess, and she told him to hitch to his chariot the swiftest pair of horses in the Universe! Bhágíráth knew that Indra's chariot wheels cause the thunder, while the gleam of his sword is the lightning's flash, and that his swift horses know the mind of their master and go whither he silently wills. He besought from Indra one of his shining white steeds, which was granted, while the Sun-God furnished the second of the pair, a pure white horse with black ears. They were so swift that they could, if necessary, make the circuit of the earth seven times in a day! When Bhágíráth mounted the chariot Ganga followed whither he drove clear to the sea! So *three worlds* were blest by her who is the water in which the sacred feet of Vishnu have been bathed! In my journeyings I stopped at Bháratpur, near Agra, because I remembered when I was a student in Agra I used to go to the forest near Bháratpur where lived a company of pandits and holy men. There again I sought for knowledge. I have not told you the exact order of my pilgrimages, but I know you will want to hear of my trip to Jagannáth over in Orissa, on the eastern coast, one of the Four Corners of the Earth."

Just here I feel I must pause in Raghuwár's story to tell you that in my present hurried condition, preparing to leave India, I cannot calmly sift and write down everything he says. I cannot tell you how many times during the writing of the one hundred and one pages of manuscript I have thus far inscribed I have had to stop to talk with or listen to him as he asked me questions about ordinary yet great world subjects, or those things that touch the springs of life and religion, or to tell me his dreams, sometimes very remote from

the subject just then in hand. For instance, while telling me of the hermit-like religious men in the forest of Bháratpur, he ran off into an enthusiastic dissertation on his hope of learning English just so he could read all great books and learn what men who have known Him, say of Jesus. Then he spoke very plainly of his surprise that in the East so little has been done to fulfill Christ's command, "Go ye into all the world." "Why is it? Why is it?" he asks so frequently. I tell him the reason good men and women give. "But then," he says, "is it not *the* work given to all Christians? What greater work has been given to them? It is also a work, in a way, self propagating." Someway here he talked of the recent murders of English people in England by Indians. He said: "*They were not prepared by Christians to live in a Christian land,*" that is, the Indians were unprepared for English life.

However, we are back on a journey to Jagannáth now, and Raghuwár says: "When we reached the temple of the Blue Wheel, six miles from Jagannáth, there is a test that will seem strange to you. The pilgrim who can see from the Nílchakra (Blue Wheel) Temple the dome of the temple of Jagannáth, that pilgrim will be able to see the gods there and receive a benefit, but the eyes of some are believed to be holden! Of course, I know now that in such cases defective eyesight is the reasonable cause of the withholden vision.

"From the Níl Chakra temple on to Jagannáth, caste is abolished. All, from the despised worker in leather to the Brahmin, may sit there and eat together. In not one other place in all India may this occur without loss of caste for him of the so-called higher birth. The pictures and shrines of Jagannáth always represent him accompanied by his brother Balaráma and his sister, Subhadra, for remember that Jagannáth is generally believed an incarnation of Krishna, therefore, also of Vishnu. The color of Vishnu is blue (though red is sacred to him), but

Krishna's color changed to black once when a serpent hissed at him, and so Jagannáth is black instead of blue! Balaráma was the incarnation of Shesha, the serpent companion of Vishnu, and Subhadra of Lakshmi, Vishnu's wife. There are different stories about this deformed, black, wooden idol called 'The Lord of the Earth.' I will tell you the version I believed. Krishna realized that he had done deeds with his hands which are not lawful for men so he decided to cut off those hands and sit always as a mutilated figure."

I thought as Raghuwár related this version that Krishna certainly made an "awful warning" of himself! The story I have heard is that a king called down the Architect of the Gods (Viswakarma) to make an idol for a temple he had built at Purí. This idol was to be the receptacle of the bones of Krishna. The divine architect said he would make the idol on the condition that no one looked at it until it was finished, but the king could not restrain his curiosity and he looked in on the workman too soon and Viswakarma disappeared leaving an ugly, shapeless figure which Brahmá, the Creator, afterwards gave eyes.

Raghuwár continued: "When I reached the temple enclosure and entered, a gate-keeper struck me lightly with a cane. This he did with each, otherwise the thronging press of pilgrims through the gates would result in constant disasters. It was not the time of the great festival when Jagannáth is drawn in a chariot to the sea shore. This occurs once a year. I have never been there at this great festival time; thousands on thousands of pilgrims go there and they are mad with anxiety to help draw the chariot, believing to do so is, as we say, 'the root of Joy'! There were multitudes of pilgrims at Jagannáth, though, when I was there. I could not like it in the crowd as I did wandering amidst the cave-dwelling hermits of God's mountains. That was a *clean road*, washed by God's rain and snow and wild winds. No one

may cook his own food at Purí, all pilgrims must eat food cooked within the temple enclosure and sold in the bazar. Jagannáth did not greatly appeal to me. I bathed in the sea there. I bought my souvenirs which every pilgrim to this shrine buys, namely, a picture of the deities, costing from one to ten cents, and a light cane which is sold in the temple veranda for one cent. These are carried home to be worshipped in the family circle. As I have said before we must buy our rice already cooked, and pilgrims often dry a part to carry back for distribution among friends and relatives.

"I did not stay long in Jagannáth, but went on to Calcutta to worship Mother Ganges where she meets the Lord of Rivers, the great salt sea! Kapilá is the deity worshipped at Ganga's Sea. He is an incarnation of Vishnu, taken one time in order to save one of his wives, the Earth, from destruction. This sphere was being sadly mutilated by the sons of King Ságara digging to find one of the horses of Indra stabled in the lower regions! Kapilá stopped the work of destruction." The whole story is too long to write. Raghuwár sat down on the floor and acted it all out as well as he could with the stage scenery at his command! I wish there were time to describe this private rehearsal to you in detail. He made quite graphic the giant excavations, the appearance of Vishnu incarnate and all this mythological drama of the wonderful ancient Hindus!

In his recital up to this point Raghuwár had not told of his visit to Ayodhyá, the birthplace of his favorite incarnation, Rámachandra or Ráma, so I asked him to tell me about this celebrated place of pilgrimage, and this is what he said:

"There are several celebrated spots in Ayodhyá. There is first the high place where the Monkey-God, Hanumán, was established Master of Ayodhyá. He had been such a faithfully of Ráma's that, in gratitude for the Monkey's services, Ráma said: 'As long as the Sun and Moon shine or Gangá flows

on the Earth you shall reign in the place of my birth, Ayodyá.' Beside this high place there is the Golden Palace (though the gold is not there now) and the Jewel Throne (though the jewels also are gone) and the temple at the place where Ráma was born.

"My long pilgrimages were over at last. I must say that perhaps I did not make this round as most pilgrims do, or rather, with the same purposes. I hated ignorance on any question; I went with a burning desire for *religious knowledge*. When I reached a sacred shrine if I found no learned pandit who could explain to me the Vedas or some difficult *slok* of our holy books, I was dissatisfied. I was a questioner, and, for the most part, a doubter. Some go ready to believe anything, accepting every tale, but I wished to investigate, to *know for myself*. Ah, I cannot think of those days of wandering, seeking for knowledge, without deep sadness that I lost very much of the time of my youth! The one thing that comforts me is that perhaps, through them, I was being prepared to work amongst my own wandering people. *I know the way over which they are stumbling unsatisfied.*

"I went back to my old place in Allahabad at the temple by the Ganges and remained there eight months. In my favorite *Purána*, the Bhágavat, from which I was never parted, I had read that in the most illustrious Age of Tretá, or the Era of the Three Incarnations, the event I will relate occurred:

"The Mountains of the Dawn must first be conquered by the Sun, and in those long-ago days when his splendor arose from behind the Morning Hills, there yet loomed beyond far higher, far more precipitous, the Vindhya range. So great was the height of this mountain wall that the Sun's beams were so long in scaling it that the people on the other side were late with the morning Sun-worship. Then were the immortals in great pain and unrest, for until the Bráhmíns of earth have performed the morning worship of the Sun, the gods remain thirst-



ing for the water poured out from thousands of *argas* (the copper ladle used in oblations to the sun) quenching the thirst of the shining ones. Thus the gods fainted with longing each day until the Sun had conquered the stupendous heights of the Vindhyás. Now these mountains were the disciples of Agastya Muni, so the gods made this petition of the lord of the heights: 'Oh, Great King, thy disciples give us great trouble, for so long as the Sun remains in their shadow the priests do not pour out oblations which satisfy our thirst.' Upon hearing this, Agastya Muni went to his pupils, and, as proper disciples must ever do, they prostrated themselves before their master, who, as he stretched out his hand in blessing, said: 'Thus remain, O sons!' To this day, then, these heights are bowed down!

"Amongst the famous hills of the Vindhyás, I read of one shaped like a cow's head, and therefore most sacred. On inquiry I found it to be near a place called *Mahoba*! I felt I must see it in order to verify my favorite purána. Being so near Allahabad, I was soon in this little town, where I was to indeed *see the Sun* arise! I looked with interest at the hills of fantastic shape by which the train flew. I recalled the Ramáyan and remembered that Hanumán and the Vánar chiefs and allies, carried great mountains to help Ráma build a bridge from India to Ceylon, and when the work was finished the monkey hosts were still flying through the air carrying mountains southward. When they received word that the bridge was built they dropped their burdens wherever they happened to be, for they were no longer needed! A lot of hills fell down in Central India, and they are the Vindhyás, who obey the mandate of their master, Agastyá Múni, to this day!

"When I reached the town I was at once directed to the well-known head man of the town. You all know him, I need not tell you of his riches nor of his power here. In the surrounding villages we all know his name: The Honorable Feet of Shiv. He gave me a place to abide, and soon discovered that I could read

and expound the scriptures of the Hindus, so he asked me to remain. The foundations of a large new temple had been laid and there was already some anxious thought as to the securing of a proper *pujári*, or priest, to perform temple services. They wanted some one learned and fitted to give the temple a name and fame. They took me as one sent. Usually in erecting such a temple four or five years are consumed, but so many workmen were engaged that this large temple was finished in a year's time! It was dedicated to Ráma, his brother Lakshman and wife, Sítā. It cost ten thousand rupees (\$3,330). In the course of its erection I was often called to see if all was right and properly arranged.

"That is almost six years ago, and save for short pilgrimages, I



### "My New Temple"

have remained here ever since. When the new temple was completed I was asked to remain indefinitely and perform the worship of the idols. I felt it were better to go from place to place in my search for knowledge, but here I was constrained to stay, and now I believe I see a part at least of God's purpose in this.

He set me down in the midst of the people of Maḥoba for nearly six years. They learned to know that I was well acquainted with the holy books of the Hindus. I gathered quite a large library here of such books as the *Mahābhārat*, with its one million eight hundred thousand *sloḳs*, costing, for a rather plain copy, fifty rupees, or sixteen dollars. They are very large books you know. The people knew I was of a famous family, famous even with the gods, for Hindus believe that Rām Chandra's earthly father, King Dasarath himself, was of this Kashyap Muni tribe. They knew I understood all the idolatrous formulas, could read Sanskrit, etc. When I left the temple door they knew an educated priest of Vishnu left it, and not an unlearned, wandering beggar. Yes, God had a purpose for me as well as Maḥoba. He meant that I should cease wandering in search of vain knowledge and find it just by my door.

"I was, of course, right on the road from the Mission House to the bazar. I saw Christian young men going by, and there was something in their conduct that attracted me—they *were different from Hindus*. As I learned of their straight walk I had a longing to know their Book. I believed that there should be a correspondence between the *Pustak* (Book) and the life of its believers, but I had not found it so among the Hindus; that is, they lived up to the worst in our Books and not to the best. There was no teaching, in all the philosophy of my favorite *purāna*, which kept men from sin, and I felt in my inmost being that this was wrong; something was certainly wrong! I kept on ringing the great bell with the image of Garud, the eagle servant of Vishnu, upon it, to waken the gods of the temple; I made the bed each night for the idols with mattress, sheets and pillows; I spread and sprinkled it with flowers; I placed each morning sweetmeats before the idols, at noon a full dinner and in the evening a supper (of which I myself afterwards partook). So my days passed by. I read and explained our books: I went through

the many, many idolatrous formulae; every morning I worshipped the Sun by Rámkund here in Mahoba. I was a priest of Vishnu, but I felt I was doing not the work of heaven, but of earth. I had an unsatisfied soul.

“One day, early in this year, about seven months ago, I decided to come over to the Mission House and ask the Sahib (Mr. Gordon) for his holy book. I had often seen him and he had always spoken politely to me as he passed the temple. I had also often asked Miss Burgess to help me out with English, as I was beginning the study of your language. I would bring my book out and ask her words as she was on her way to or from the bazar. I only remember seeing you once, when you were distributing sweetmeats to the school-girls over on the lake front. I decided this day that I would find out the root of that of which I caught glimpses in the Mission compound. *I believed I would find it in their book.*

“So I came over here to Mr. Gordon’s office and asked him if he would let me take some portion of his sacred book. He replied by putting in my hand a Hindí Gospel according to Matthew, and telling me to read it, and if there was aught I did not understand he would be glad to explain it to me. You will scarcely be able to realize how soon, how almost immediately, I longed to break away from the temple; it seemed like a prison to me. *I just wanted to read and study my new book.* I knew it would be limited by certain hours. I felt like deserting my temple’s handsome walls, its rich food, the adoration it brought to me, for daily I, myself, was worshipped! I wrapped my book up carefully in my drapery and turned reluctantly back to the temple. As soon as I could, which was about noon, I locked the temple door and sat down with delight to my new feast—the *Book!* The people understood that the hours between noon and four o’clock daily were mine uninterruptedly. I did not read it rapidly. I felt I must understand this book. So I read it slowly. I compared it

with what I saw in life; I meditated upon it; it was full of richness.

“People said about my becoming a Christian: How can he



W. E. Gordon

know? He has never heard a hymn; he has never heard a sermon. No one has explained the Gospel to him. How can he know? But I, as I sat all alone in the shadow of our ancient

idols, had a Teacher. I understood that Gospel. I compared it with my Hindu books. I saw the truth shining clear in Matthew's Gospel, clear like a transparent jewel. In our old books the truth was also, but so blackened and soiled, so mixed up with lies, it is almost impossible to find. I, alone with the Holy Spirit of God and His written Word, in a heathen temple, was convinced clearly, unmistakably, that there is but one incarnation to meet men's needs, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world; that Jesus knew that I sat *alone* in that temple of Vishnu with a hungry mind and a hungry soul. He had placed me there alone that I might have a certain freedom to search for Himself. It says in our Ramáyana something that is like 'Seek and ye shall find:'

*'That man who desires above all things, one thing,  
And places his heart upon that alone,  
That thing he shall receive  
And hold it as his own!'*

"I did not seem to need a human interpreter; the words glistened clear as jewels. I did not go to ask Mr. Gordon questions, but when I had carefully read the whole book I went to ask him for another book, and he gave me the Gospel according to John. After Jesus, I was most interested in the character and work of John the Baptist; he was a grand forerunner, the preparer of the way! I think I could never, or not for years, have found my way out of the darkness into the light if I had not been given the directions in a book. I could not have had Christians in the temple, and if I had gone to the Christian's church, or come often to speak to the Sahib, the owner of the temple and the Hindus would have, in some way, stopped my doing so, but no one noticed the little Book. I kept it wrapped in a cloth when I was not reading it. I had always been of studious habits, so easily the Book was to me both teacher and preacher. I must

say that in the beginning, the walk of Christians attracted me so much, that when Mr. Gordon asked me what I had heard that made me wish to become a Christian, I replied: 'It is not what I have *heard*, but what I have *seen*.' The living epistle truly first attracted me *and sent me to the Book*. God's Word converted me from a priest of Vishnu to be a disciple of Christ!

When I had finished reading John's Gospel I decided I must not tarry; I must go *at once*, confessing my faith and become a Christian! I studied for a while and then decided to go to the Sahib. He said: 'Do you know? Do you understand? You must think this over carefully.' I went back to the temple, but, oh, I felt *I must get rid of this burden!* Only my body served in the temple; there was no heart in my service. *My heart lay on the ground!* Then I thought of a way out. It was the time of a great *melá* (religious fair or convention) which occurs every twelve years in Ujjain. I would go there and get away from my temple prison! Different ones tried to persuade me to stay; said the temple service could not go on without me, etc., but when I remained determined, the money for traveling expenses was placed in my hand and I was escorted to the station. I went to Ujjain in Central India, where you went this summer."

Yes, how I recalled my day in Ujjain, one of, if not, the most ancient of India's cities. I was told of that awful Hindu convention, of thousands of holy (?) men appearing in a procession of absolute nakedness. So gross is it that this year the leavening influence of Christianity was shown by the fact that Hindus themselves said: "This will be impossible to us in another twelve years!"

Then Raghuwár proceeded: "I decided that when I returned from Ujjain I would stop off at Bina. I said nothing to anyone, not even the Sahib, but I remembered another missionary. You know Doctor Mámá (Mrs. Gordon) dedicated her new hospital here in the spring, and one of the speakers was Mr. Elsam, of Bina.



I liked what he said so very much that I felt if I could find that Sahib again he could help me. I had gone to the opening of the hospital that day with my best friend, a young man by the name of Bihári Lál. He lives, you know, just across the road from the temple. From the beginning we have been close friends. To-day my two little copies of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ are in his hands for safekeeping! When I went to Ujjain I gave them to him. I pray they may do their work in his proud Brahmin home as they did in the temple of that rich Mahoba family!

“Well, I stopped off at Bina and went to the Mission House. I had told no one my plans. I went eagerly to give myself to my Savior, when, behold! the Sahib had gone to the foreign land! My heart sank, but when I thought it came to me that there must be some one in the Mission House, some one who knew the Way! Then Miss Gordon came, and I liked her gentle, clear way of speaking of her Best Friend. She knew my need. She wrote to her brother, Sahib Gordon of Mahoba, and he wrote that he would come in June, and if I wished I could wait in Bina, but if I desired to return to Mahoba, to come and he would help me. The Christians in Bina advised me to stay there, that in Mahoba I would probably be bitterly persecuted, but oh, I was eager! I felt I could not wait. I knew not what night was coming, and decided to return at once to Mahoba!

“When I got to Jhansi I selected the train which gets in here so early in the morning that it is dark and long before dawn. In the daytime people would likely see me and compel me to go to the temple. Always, for the whole twenty-four hours, the rich owner of the temple has watchmen at the station to guard his bags of grain and cotton. In the daytime they would see me and tell of my arrival. I reached Mahoba at two o’clock in the morning and hastened along the moonlit road to the Mission House. I



was as a man who has long lost his dearest treasure, and after the many days he suddenly finds it, before him, in his hands! What joy! I was inside the Mission grounds, the long lost treasure was in my grasp—the *saving religion*! I entered the gate with intense eagerness.

“It was a night filled with moonlight, and first of all I went down to the lake, all silver in the glow. I sat down on the stone steps of the bathing place. I looked out upon the dark leaves of the lotus and on beyond to the shining stretch of moonlighted water. I was travel stained, so I removed my clothes and bathed in the cool waters. My Brahminical cord had been cut. I had in Bina, with my own hands removed that sacred sign of the twice born. Then I had my *sikhá* (lock of hair left long on top of head) cut off. The cord, the lock, the idolatrous mark in my forehead, the beads about my neck, the four signs, were gone. I was clean from them. I hoped the Sahib would be asleep outdoors by his office. I would creep up and see and then sit quietly near him till the dawn. I was safe, *I was safe*! I certainly now had freedom and could follow the desires and prayers of my heart!

“How thankful I was when I saw Mr. Gordon and Khet Singh were asleep in the moonlight outdoors! The dogs ran barking to meet me. I put out my hand and patted them and they ceased. I tried to walk softly over the gravel, but Mr. Gordon sat up in bed and asked, ‘Who is it?’ I just answered, ‘It is I,’ and Khet Singh recognized my voice. Then I sat down on his (Khet Singh’s) bed and we talked till daylight. I told them my experiences and my plans. I wanted a place to stay indoors so the people would not know I was here *until I was baptized*! I had come all the way, I had run from the station to the Mission, with this burning desire in my heart, which only baptism could quench! Then I felt the burden would roll off, the Hindus would give up hope of me. It was baptism in the

name of Jesus that I wanted. I thought of it when I bathed in the lake out there in the moonlight, just beyond the garden we see, that the next time I came down to the bathing place it would be to baptismal waters! Mr. Gordon gave me a place in Khet Singh's house. At noon, you remember, Mr. Gordon called the grown Christians to his dining room."

Yes, I remembered. We asked "the Pandit," as he is generally called, to come in. I recall how my heart went out to the bright face with a veil of diffidence over the eagerness revealed there. We did not know him then as we soon came to know him. It seemed almost unbelievable that he should have "left all" so suddenly; we did not know how he regarded that "all." Strange that we should ever be slow to believe in the power of the Gospel? We expressed to him our joy in his decision, but pointed out the path of bitter ostracism and almost certain persecution that lay before him. He was reassured of the ever present Helper, and then when he had expressed his desire to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ and of His superiority over all the gods, he was allowed to go to Khet Singh's room again.

Then came the school of this young church in Asia. Mr. Gordon carefully explained to the adult members that we must all stand by this convert from a very stronghold of idolatry. The head-man, whose great temple was empty of its priest, had not only Mahoba but all the villages for miles about largely in his power on account of his great wealth. Many other head men were in debt deeply to him, and, therefore, completely in his power. The wheat market was in the control of this bigoted Brahmin. It would be, indeed, strange if no attempts were made to get Raghuwár back or injure him. They might also attempt to hurt, in some way, those who had influenced him. He recalled to them that their new brother came to them with but the clothes he was wearing, and the single green silk drapery

which he had worn away from the temple. He had not a *piece* of money, and his hands were all unused to labor. There was a bright intellect, untrained in Christianity, and soft hands which had never worked. Was the church willing to take the responsibility of providing for their new brother?

Then the Christian young men considered how far and how much and by whom he should be helped. Finally they decided he should be given a living allowance, two dollars a month, and should have time to study, and they would try to devise some way by which he might earn something with his hands till he knew "more perfectly." That was Wednesday, May 12, 1909. Then this occurred, as Raghuwár relates it: "I was sitting in the house I now occupy by the side of the road. Khet Singh had prepared my dinner and I sat alone eating it. When I had finished I called to him to please bring me some water to wash my hands, when a familiar voice cried, '*Is it you, Bába jí? Oh, Bába jí, Bába jí!*' and here came one of Mr. Gordon's big schoolboys, whom you all know and like, Bájí Lál! He was standing near and recognized my voice. He came straight into the house and sat down beside me and said: 'Are you going to become a Christian?' I said, 'Yes.' Then he began: 'Oh, don't become a Christian; much badness comes from being a Christian. You will have much trouble. You will wander about hungry and despised. The Christians will be good to you now, but afterward turn you out. Don't you remember that Christian man, W——, who could get no work nor help?' 'That will happen,' I said, 'only if a man is unworthy.'

*'No one gives us pain or joy,  
The roots lie in ourselves.'*

so I repeated to Bájí Lál from the Ramáyan. "That may be all true," he said, "but come now with me to the temple; your cushion waits you there, your old place; here you will only have trouble."

"I said: 'Let trouble come; we are not made for joy alone. *I will do this upon which I have set my mind.*' While we were talking it seemed like magic, for all along by the house where I was then, the very house where I live now, was a line of men from the Headman's house, himself, his nephews and relatives. He stood under the fig tree there and called 'Bábá jí, Bábá jí, come, hear what I have to say!' I remained silent. They were quiet, too.

"Soon they began to go, but one remained—one with whom I had a deep friendship, the nephew of the Headman—Hírálál. He came up to the door and said, 'Open, I am alone. Let me come in. I cannot prevent your doing as you wish; only let *me* come in and talk with you!' I believed him and opened the door, when, behold, here came the others crowding! They had hidden along the wall! I am so thankful for my house by the side of the road, but then I was troubled. Why was I troubled? I was not afraid, but I wanted to sit in that house alone and think. A wonderful step was before me, the climax of my longings, my strivings. I had been saying to myself, 'Freedom! Freedom!'—the temple of the gods and the bondage of it were behind! I was *free* now to follow the Savior of Men! Soon I would keep my tryst with Him and be baptized.

"I wanted to meditate on it all, and now they came bursting in with their words and petitions so unutterably far from mine! They threw their hats and turbans at my feet, a Hindu custom which means 'I am the dust of your feet, I beg of you!' They said: 'We plead with you, do not become a Christian.' I answered: 'I make no promises, I bind myself not, I must first do my duty Godward.' 'Oh,' they pleaded, 'do not make us ashamed!' I replied: 'One is not shamed by the deeds of another, but by his own deeds!' They plead most politely: 'Only come over to the temple; let us talk with you; please, kindly come!' So I just arose quietly and went.

"When I got to the office there were a hundred and fifty or two hundred men assembled there, all the leading Hindus of the town. They began such conversation as this: 'Why are you doing this way, Bábá jí? You are wise, so wise that you teach us. What is your meaning?' And the Headman came up to me. You know him, how sharp he is in worldly matters and the accumulating of wealth. He spoke of those things of which he knew, which were not matters of the soul. 'If you want to get married,' he said, 'I will make four marriages for you at once; I will give you a horse to ride, a fine house and villages. If you do not wish to be a priest, that is all right. We will set you up in fine shape in another service.' I replied: 'I am not hungry for these things. I want to know God's will for me.' They were puzzled and silent. Then I asked for a drink, and one of the Brahmins went out and scoured a *lotá* or drinking cup and brought it in. I said: 'Brothers, I have just eaten with Christians. I can never again be allowed to touch a drinking cup of yours unless you, as I, throw aside forever *caste*! Kindly pour the water into my hand that I may not need to touch your drinking cup.' Sadly they did so."

"Were you not pained, pandit jí," I asked, "that you found the chasm of your ancient faith between your once best friends and you?" He looked earnestly at me and replied: "No, and I will tell you why. From the moment I left the temple, feeling in my heart of hearts that it was forever, I was filled with an abundant joy, that remains with me to this moment! *Nothing else mattered, nothing can!*"

"No man can take it from you," I said. I wish you could see his face as I do this night. There is that intellectual look that redeems unhandsome features; just now there is the light of a high joy. He is satisfied. I wish Miss Graybiel could see him and be glad once more that God Himself directed her to Mahoba, if only that this one longing soul might be filled!



Miss Mary Graybiel.

I must get on with his story, for Raghuwár is excited now, like a soldier who relates the greatest battle of his life!

“When I said to them that I had eaten with Christians, their faces fell, and when I added that I had partaken of flesh food, they could but say: ‘Alas! What is to be done now?’ The people about began to say: ‘Bábá jí is honest; he tells right out what he has done!’ Then for three hours I, alone, sat in the midst of all the leading Hindus of Mahoba and debated with them against the *Shástras* of the Hindus, which I had studied for years, and for the *Shástra* of the Christians I had known for seven months, and then only in part. As I debated they began to murmur: ‘Where did he learn this? He must have known this

book for years!’ They asked me such questions as these: ‘What *riski* (devotee) have Christians? Have they Valmíkí, Bhárat, Dwájýá,’ etc. Many long names of our Hindu devotees they repeated. ‘Yes,’ I told them, ‘there are Paul and Barnabas and Peter, who were ready to die for truth.’ I told them of Paul’s vision. You see, I read the Acts of the Apostles in Bíná, which was a very good thing for me then. They told of unconquerable Rámá. They said: ‘What, did your Christ ever *kill* anybody? Ráma killed thousands of enemies!’ ‘No,’ I replied, ‘but He conquered Death itself! Did Rám Chandra conquer death? I know that Jesus, on the third day in the tomb, *arose from the dead!*’ They were speechless. Then they said: ‘Christians will touch a Basor. Do they bathe and keep themselves holy and apart?’ You know, a Basor is the lowest of outcasts, the scavengers and keepers of fogs. I replied to them: ‘It is written in *your* book in the Bhágavád Gítá:

‘God, the Blameless One, is like Surya Naráyan (the Sun), who, in the water jar of the Brahmin and Basor alike reflects his image, touching both the clean and the unclean.’

“Now, does *he* become unclean because he touches the Basor’s water jar? *You* become polluted under like circumstances. Is God an outcast and impure?

“‘We do not see the connection,’ they said. My answer was, ‘God placed souls in the Basor and the Brahmin—you admit that. He reached down and *touched* both lives; therefore, he does not observe what you do—*caste*. According to your own reasoning God is unclean!’ Again they were puzzled. ‘Does God put caste marks on men?’ I asked when they were silent. ‘Is the Brahminical cord, the sacred lock of hair growing longer than the rest of the hair, does the worship mark of clay in the forehead, the string of wooden beads around the neck—do these four signs *grow* on men, placed there by God?’

“Three hours we talked, and I learned in that time that I had

*unfailing weapons of truth in my hands!* The Headman's eldest son and the doctor from the Government Dispensary took me away from the crowd to the cotton gin near the temple. They said: 'Why did you tell that you had eaten with Christians, and, above all things, that you had eaten *meat*? We could have gotten you out of this net for a few rupees if you had not confessed publicly! Now it will take many rupees, but we will give them. We will get you back into caste or help you to become a member of the Arya Samáj (Advanced Hindu Association); we will get you another work, make you a grand wedding, only don't go back to the Christians!' They were strong on the marriage question, feeling, perhaps that that was the reason I had left them—to get a wife.

"I said: 'All these things are of this world. I am in search of the things of another world, and *I have found them!* As I sat there with them I felt like a prisoner. I wanted more than anything else, then, to get *where I could breathe the air*, anything but this awful shelter! But they brought in a cot and told me to go to sleep if I wished, so I just lay down, asking God to deliver me from their hands and all idolatrous thrall, and fell asleep. I knew four men were stationed there as watchmen, that there was no chance of escape. I did not fear any bodily injury; I only felt I was there with Hindus without having kept my tryst with Jesus! I thought, too, that it was Khet Singh's wedding day, and I could not see the marriage.

In the evening I sat outside with relatives and dependants of the Headman, who were doing all they could to interest me, when I saw Mr. Gordon coming with a bundle. He had brought me my clothes, and as he handed them to me he said: 'Do you wish to remain here?' How the people listened for my reply, for they had been teaching me what to say if the Sahib came. Oh, how I wished to say one word of comfort to Mr. Gordon! I could only look at him and say: 'I will not come now.' Khet Singh was with the Sahib. I made a



sign to him as though to say, 'It will be all right,' and afterward Khet Singh told me he spoke the word of comfort to the Sahib which I had wished to speak! He said: 'I feel that the pandit's heart is with us, he will never go back. We must persevere.'

"I saw them turn away, but I kept talking to them in my heart! I slept there with men on all four sides. I lay awake for a long time and longed for freedom. I hoped they would take me away, so I could get out some way and escape in some unguarded moment of theirs. I prayed, too. There were two Moham-medan watchmen, and they spoke good words to me; they told me not to give up, to keep hold of a better truth than I had ever had before. God sent help to me in my prison, too, through their words."

Mr. Gordon has told me his side of the story also. He says the pandit had such a look in his eyes when he said, "I will not come now," that he knew he was longing to come. Our hearts did go out to him, surrounded as he was by Hindus, and we met to pray as did the church so long ago for Paul. We spoke several times of *our* "Acts of the Apostles." That evening, Thursday, May 13, I was to leave for a trip on Mission business to Central India. The others promised to send me a telegram when the baptism occurred.

Raghuwár says he lay awake much that night and thought. He tried to plan a way to get a message to Mr. Gordon; he looked forward into the future, feeling he would in some way escape and be able to keep his tryst. He says: "I did not think Christians could get near enough to help me any, *but, oh, I did want them to know I was true!*" The next day, Friday, May 14, I was without any sign of my new brothers. I spent a sad day, a long, sad day. In the evening I asked to be allowed to look into the temple, which could be done without leaving the house where I was confined. I must tell you that I exercised still a sort of authority over the men. If I looked at them sternly they turned

away. As I went to the door I gave them such a look and told them to stand back, and there, near the door, outside in the road, between the house and the temple, was one of your Christian teachers, Bihárí Lál Boaz! He was quick to see and started when he saw me, and then he just carelessly walked up as near as he could get to me and I said quietly to him: 'Brother, they take me to Bánda today. Tell the Sahib not to be troubled. *I shall escape!*' He assented, and that was all I could say, but it gave me great comfort. I was not leaving without a sign.

"In the night I was taken in a closed vehicle to the station. I was told that I was going to Banda to be made a member of the Arya Samáj, to be then married, restored to caste and my temple service! I was to be a dummy in their hands! Well, there was nothing to do but to go on, so I did. They took me a detour quite out of the way, so the people at the Mission House would not hear any one going to the station, but they drove right by Claudius' house. He heard the noise of the cart and up he jumped! *Ah, they could not escape His messengers!*

"Claudius ran over here, told Mr. Gordon, and soon three Christian young men were on their way to the station. The mid-night favored. They ran swiftly, Claudius, Khet Singh and Bháshkar. I knew afterward they had money and were prepared to help me. They wanted to take clubs, but Mr. Gordon would not let the excited boys take any weapons. Well, they got their tickets, and, you know, Bháshkar is always ready for theatricals. He took off his cap and put on a turban instead, made his drapery long like a pandit, and strode the whole length of the train, and, behold, *he saw me!* Quick as a flash the others were beckoned to, and just as the train was ready to pull out all three got into our compartment! It was too late for the Hindus to get themselves and me out and off into another compartment! I took my mat and spread it on the seat and asked Khet Singh and the other two to sit on it. One of the Hindus afterwards told me that that act

of mine showed him where my heart was! They sat down beside me and Khet Singh said politely to the Hindu companions: 'Where are your honors going?' 'To Banda.' 'Is the Pandit jī accompanying you?' 'Yes.' 'May we speak to him?' 'Certainly,' they answered. They thought they were sitting so near they could hear all that was said, and it would not matter, and one Hindu got himself between me and Khet Singh.

"Then I said in the best English I could, 'Speak English to me.' They spoke anyway, backwards, crookedly, but we understood each other, and the Hindus were in the dark! They told me the Sahib would help me if I wanted to get away. I said I did and I asked them to what station they had purchased a ticket. They said, 'To Kabrai.' This is two stations east of Mahoba on the way to Maudha. I told them to get out there and I would also. You know that the mail for Jhansi passes the train from Mahoba to Banda at Kabrai. The Christian boys had thought of that and planned to take me back to Mahoba on that train if I were willing. I said to the Christians in English, 'Take my things off.' Quick as a flash they rolled my bedding up, and you should have seen the Hindus! 'Aree! Where are you going?' 'What does this mean?' 'You promised to go with us, and now you are leaving us!' 'Hold on!' but we four were clambering into the other train.

"I don't know what they thought, but they stayed helplessly on the train for Bánáda, and we went happily, how happily, back to Mahoba! I suppose the Hindus thought their four people had become three and the Christian three had become four, and so they just sat still and let the train carry them to the place for which they had bought *four* tickets! They might have been afraid of the superior numbers! It was half past four on Saturday morning when we reached Mahoba. Mr. Gordon took me into his arms and thanked God when I reached him for the second time in the dark of the morning. At six-thirty, two

hours later that morning, all the Christians gathered at the bathing place *for my baptism*. At last I could keep my tryst! That morning I could worship the Sun of Righteousness, I could pray to the Light of the World! Oh, how happy I was that lovely morning!"

Miss Pope has told me of the perfect spring morning, of the impressiveness of it all, and how quickly the Christians gathered. I missed a great deal, but how happy I was to get the telegram from Miss Burgess:

"Baptism occurred this morning at six thirty."

I was in Indore about to leave for Pandita Ramabai's.

Raghuwár says: "Mr. Gordon asked me several questions down there on the steps at the lake. 'Do you take this step of your own free will?' 'Did any one entice you into this?' Then he took my confession, and I could say from a full heart that I believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and *my Savior!* The song that floated across the lake and echoed amongst the fabled hills and stones, that beat against the walls of the little white temples by the lake was:

CHORUS: *My heart falls at the feet of Jesus!*

*Some wear the rosaries of prayer,*

*Some in their foreheads place the sacred sign,*

*Some wind about them ropes of hair,*

*And some, the cord of Brahmin line.*

*Some smear with ashes all their limbs,*

*Some are with deer skin ever found,*

*Some wear the blanket coarse and black,*

*Some wander naked o'er the ground.*

*Some worship gods and goddesses,*

*Some bathe where Ganges river flows,*

*Some sprinkle water by the peepul tree,*

*Some call and feed the hungry crows.*

*Some wander in the jungles wild,  
Some hold their arms as sticks stretched out,  
Some sit where burn five smoking fires,  
I flee, I flee, from things of doubt!*

“Between every stanza came the chorus, ‘*My heart falls at the feet of Jesus.*’ It did fall there, and there it remains. Those other things are all back in that lost past of mine.”

“Yes, Brother, all things have become new,” I say.

“The Hindus passing in the road heard the songs, and wondered at the crowd of Christians on the bank. Of course



Kirat Sagar where Raghuwar was baptised

it was soon known in the town. We do not know how the news spread, nor just how it was received, but we do know God worked wonders and there was no disturbance. *I felt I was free!* Now I could think on my new life, I could peacefully read my New Book. I had found *at last* the true way to knowledge of God's truth! It was vacation time then, you know, and

I went with Mr. Gordon and a number of the young Christian men to our out-station—Jaitpur. They did not leave me alone much in Mahoba. Some one stayed near me. There was more freedom in Jaitpur.”

Jaitpur is our interesting station supported by the Mahoba church on the other side of Kulpahár. It was thought wise to take Raghuwár on this tour.

It seems to me I have never quite so perfectly realized the inadequacy of the written word to express the spoken ones. I have tried a generous use of italics or disfiguring big capitals, but the intensity of the narrator, the earnest fact, the gestured enthusiasm, I have been unable to portray. I have been so desirous that you across the far seas shall see and hear and understand that I have often clung more closely to Hindí forms of speech than is quite consistent with perfect English. There is no indirect discourse in the language of the one whose narrative I am trying to faithfully present. Try to fancy you are listening as he proceeds:

“After a few days we all came back to Kulpahár, as there were some people there—Hindus—with whom we wished to talk, with one especially who was deeply interested in Christianity. I was left in Kulpahár for the rest of the day and Mr. Gordon and the others came on to Mahoba. I was to join them that evening. When I came to the Kulpahár station I saw two Mahoba men, or men who had lived there. One was a Hindu police *darogá*, who had often spoken to me when I was a priest of Vishnu, and the other was a clerk in the canal department, a member of the Arya Samáj, who had also lived in Mahoba. One of them recognized me and began to talk with me, said I was a turn-coat and had gone to a book and a religion which was not true. That excited me and we began to argue. The clerk talked much of an Arya book—Satya Prakásh (Light of Truth). He spoke of its quotations from the Vedas and from the Bible. He made

misquotations; that is, either the book or he had made a mistake. I said: I am certain you have made a mistake. 'Well,' he replied, 'You just come with me to Bándá and I will show you the very passage in the Satyá Prakash.' "

I must say here that Raghuwár has a keen mind, reveling in debate, and at this time every faculty of mind and heart is awake to the support of his new Book. I have met men like him in my college days, delighting to meet others in such a combat. One thought possessed him just then, to show this clerk he had made a mistake, so he said he would go. Bándá is on the other side of Mahoba. I am surprised to think he went so willingly at this time, and yet I know how he was aroused and how fearless he has been right through. He continues:

"The Arya Society has an orphanage for boys in Bándá, and I was taken there. A learned pandit was called, and he and the clerk began to talk in English. I only gathered this much from the conversation, that the Headman had written to them about me. I spoke politely to them and jestingly said: Yes, Christians have gotten my mind into a hubbub, but you will straighten me out. I was eager to get to Satyá Prakash! They brought the book and I looked it over carefully. It quotes in one place as from the Bible this sentence: 'Not *anyone* that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.' I said, "That is a misquotation!" "

I cannot but wonder here that he knew this slight twist of words, "anyone" for "everyone"!

"In another place it says that the account of a story *just* like that in Genesis about Abraham taking his son Isaac to sacrifice him at God's command in the mount, occurs in the Vedas. I answered at once, "The word sacrifice does not occur in the Vedas, therefore how can it be?" I wish you could have seen their faces when I showed it to them! They knew I had studied

the Vedas. I said about the Satyá Prakásh, '*This is all a made-up book!*'

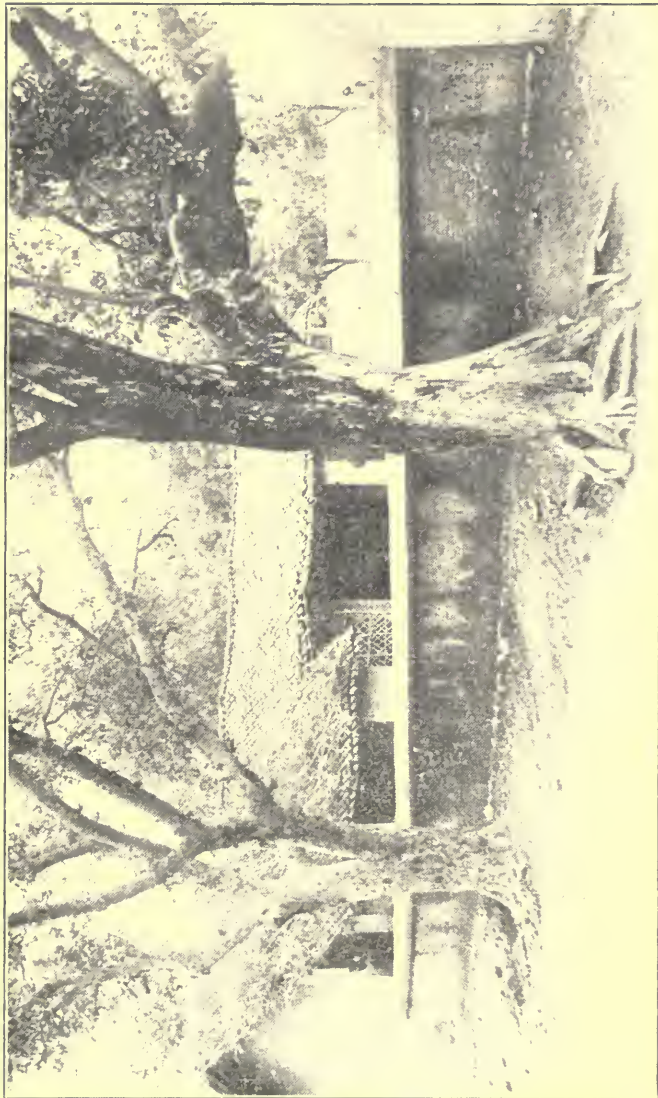
"You know, a former Damoh Orphanage boy lives in Bándá. He goes often to talk with the people of the Arya Association, and he is allowed free entrance, because they hope to get a hold on him. I knew of course he would help me to get away if I had trouble, but I could not speak to him then. I kept on talking and arguing with them the next day. When they told me if Christians came to invite them in, but not to go outdoors to meet them, I resented this interference with my liberty again, and felt I must get out! I thought I'd manage to get away to some jungly place and take my bath and be free for awhile again, but Nanhu came again, and he did not ask me to come out to him, but walked right in! There were none of the leaders there, and he gave me the surprising information that two Mahoba young men had come with the Maulvi Yakub Ali, one of our Maudha Christians! I said: 'Help me with my things, let us go *at once!*' Do you know, everybody in the Orphanage was silent; no one said a word; we just walked out! What a warm welcome the Mahoba boys gave me, embracing me as the Sahib had done in the dark of that morning I was baptized! The missionary in Bándá asked the Magistrate to send four men to the station to see that I got off without trouble at the train. At the station the Arya men came up to Yakub Ali, whom they knew, and said: 'You have done a bad thing!' But we got on the train all right and I gladly turned my face towards Mahoba again. You know, I have not been approached since. Yesterday I saw one of the Headman's relatives, and he put his hands together in our way of beseeching and said: 'Oh, don't talk to me! *Don't, I beg of you, draw me into the net in which you are entangled!*' Only today I met the Headman's uncle. He said if I would only do so, he would yet reinstate me, that we could go off on a long pilgrimage, I, the master and he, the disciple—it seems as if they



cannot believe I have left Hinduism forever! They know there is a power, but they do not know it is the *power of truth and not of witchcraft*.

"Oh, the Bible is such a wonderful mine! I long to dig out its treasures and take them to my people. The field I see ever with the eyes of my heart is the unreached peninsula of Kathiawár, where millions of Hindus live who seemed to me in ignorance of Hinduism, and people with somewhat open minds. They eagerly listened to me when I read to them the *puránas* on my return from Dwárká. I enjoyed teaching them, and I feel I must go back there and travel from village to village, expounding the Book that is true. *I long to go*, not tarrying long in a place, but evangelize Kathiawar first; and when I have found a good center, to ask our Mahoba church to send some one to abide in that place, where I hope I shall have gathered together, as Paul did, a congregation of believers, and from such centers evangelists can go out. I want to be free to go, not bound at once by any ties, except to live to preach the Gospel to my people. I seem to see my field stretched out before me, full of villages in ignorance of religion, *in the dark*. I want to learn to use God's Word and then for *freedom to preach the Gospel in 'regions beyond'*! Paul is my example of the 'sent one.' "

I have inquired about Kathiawar since Raghuwár told me this, his longing, as he thought there are no missionaries amongst the three million people on this peninsula. The Methodist Mission is working in Baroda and they have put a dozen Christian preachers in the heart of Kathiawár, but the Superintendent in the Bárodá district, Rev. L. E. Linzell, says, "the problem is a vast one for so few workers." He also adds this information: "Dwárká is situated on a small peninsula which looks like an island. It is a beautiful place, and multitudes go there on pilgrimage. The problem of the evangelization of Kathiawár is indeed a vast one for a few workers."



His "House by the Side of the Road"

Shall we not all pray that God may guide in an especial manner this sometime priest of Vishnu, that we in no way hinder him if God sends him to "regions beyond," as he did Paul so long ago; that he indeed have freedom to go where he wills according to God's will, and that in no way we dampen the ardor of this disciple of Jesus if he feels thrust forth in untrodden ways of our missions. An oft repeated prayer of ours seems answered in Raghuwár, for his heart is on fire with the missionary spirit, a Pauline spirit, we believe, "not to glory in another's province in regard to things ready to our hand," but eager, when his weapons are ready, to go to unreached provinces and fight for the overthrow of Satan. He has a military spirit and constantly to my surprise uses military figures, often referring to "under the banner of Jesus," "the battle is before us," etc.

It is with reluctance that I leave this story here, for it is only begun. A year ago Raghuwár was a priest in a heathen temple, thirsting for knowledge and unsatisfied. Now he is full of joy in his "house by the side of the road," where his loved friend Biháří Lál already comes to read with him and has even joined Mr. Gordon's class in the English Bible. His eyes shine when he talks of Biháří Lál. Not long ago a wandering "holy man" came to argue with him, when Raghuwár proved, at least to his own satisfaction, that this man did not know the Hindu sacred books; he showed him the way and the fallacies of Hinduism; he expected him to accept the gospel at once, and he did get far enough to wash idolatrous marks off his face and comb his hair, yes, and he ate with him, but out in the town he was lured off, greatly to Raghuwár's disappointment. He felt as if he must do battle! He still prays for him and bore the test of this disappointment well.

I asked him at last for the parting message to our American brothers and sisters. Raghuwár stood up, as he has so often done

during this narrative, and this is the message he wishes me to deliver to you as nearly as I can put it in his own words:

"It matters not how far I shall be *cast away*, how much suffering, how much trial—I want to win my brothers to Christ. You have reached out a hand and placed it on India. I beseech you not to take it up *until she be saved!* There is many an empty place, empty of hearing the Word. Oh, send here more sowers; let us go forth together to see if this place or that be fruitful or not. Until we have examined the great fields how can we know if the land be good or not? True, we shall find many patches and wide fields full of stones and thorns; we must remove the former and uproot the latter.

"*'Yadi mahinat kare, parishram khalī na jaegī,'* i. e. if we work, our labor is not empty (vain). In some we may need harvesters of ripened grain, but, oh, fields unknowing good seed lie all about us; *the sowers must go forth to sow!* We must never give up! As an ant clings to the foot of a man, never losing his hold until the body be torn from the head, so we must keep hold!

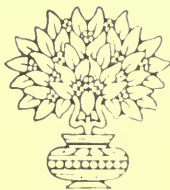
"*THIS IS A FIGHT!* How many centuries has India lain passive in Satan's hand! We have begun the battle, let no one be *piplayan* (a deserter). He has clearly commanded us; let us not be disobedient. What matter if the way be hard and rough? If God says 'Go,' how dare we crouch in our houses, hiding? How dare we question, 'How can I go to this country or that?' when He has plainly said: '*Go ye into all the world*'? We are, in such cases, *disobedient cowards!* How can any Christian decide to *just sit in his house and eat?* My favorite song of the Christian songs I have heard is:

*Onward Christian soldiers,  
Marching as to war!*

That hymn makes my heart strong! It makes me want to go

*anywhere*, ANYWHERE the sheltering shadow of the Cross has never fallen. The work needs to be done quickly, NOW. Ráwan, the Demon, once said: 'I shall make the bitter waters of the oceans sweet,' but what happened? As he tarried Rám Chandra came. Ráwan had Indra on his side. He could have accomplished this blessing for his followers, sweet water for salt, but, delaying, he died! We may have to leave some earth work undone, but first we must do the heaven work! India lies under a blanket of sin, a blanket which day by day grows heavier with waters of death. Our poor, poor country, *we must take this wet blanket off! It is smothering our land!* I want to go any place where Jesus goes before. First, I must prepare as patiently as in me lies—patiently as I can, not knowing how long my life here will be, and knowing my brothers pass out into the night. When I get impatient I think: *Wait, wait*, all will come at last! God must get his soldiers ready, even as our king does, strong, well-fed, hearty men. It is as though a campaign in a hostile country were being prepared, for the battle is sore and heavy ahead! The Hindu shástras say: 'When the battle begins, the door of heaven opens!' Let us not be afraid, let us only be ready. VICTORY CERTAINLY WILL BE. The message of Raghuwár, a disciple of Jesus, to His disciples in America."

*Related to ADELAIDE GAIL FROST in Mahoba, India, 1909.*





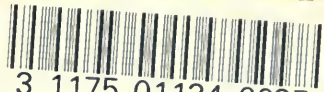












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